

“(un)-Stuck: Passion”

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ILL> Videos: “Sweet Temptation” – Sermon Spice

Introduction:

So Far in unSTUCK: Preparation & Pursuit. Tonight, we are going to discuss the third “P” in this series: Passion.

Q. How do I get myself ‘unStuck’ in physical passion?

You may be here tonight and be thinking to yourself “What does this message have to do with me?! I’m not even in a relationship right now, so I don’t need to think about controlling my passions.” *You’re Dead Wrong!!!* This is the perfect time for you to be thinking about this topic – way before temptation strikes.

- And for the married couple, share these truths with your single friends!!!
- Again, I want to fill you with Truth so that you have more incentive to honor God!

Warning: I am going to speak in very plain terms tonight!! No M&M preaching - sugar-coating!

- BUT, I am saying these things b/c I love you and want God’s best for your lives!!

A General Spiritual Truth: Too many Christians wait until temptation strikes to make up their mind about a particular sin...

ILL> Put cheesecake in front of me and my self-control is down the toilet!!!

ILL> Does an army wait until the enemy attacks to prepare itself???

- Indecision & Complacency in the now will destroy you in the future!!

Let’s get right to it! The Big Question that Christians typically ask in this area:

- **How Far is Too Far???** To what degree can I express physical passion, or love (lust)?
 - In other words, how physical can I get without offending or sinning against God??
- This is the wrong question!!!
 - Why are we always looking to toe the line of sin???

ILL> Example of *toeing the line* – Would you put your hand 1mm from a burner for warmth?

Another Question:

- Why did God create something meant for our enjoyment but then put such tight, perhaps what many consider unrealistic, restrictions on it?
 - **Universal Principle:** “With great privilege comes great responsibility”

Like our discussion last time, we find ourselves pulled and taught by two opposing cultures!!!

The Ultimate Truth (Big Idea): **If it’s not the Real Thing, it is by default a Counterfeit!!!!**

- **Counterfeit:** an imitation intended to be passed off fraudulently or deceptively as genuine; a forgery. “A lie put forth in order to deceive from the truth”
- The Enemy has always tried to counterfeit everything that God creates!! And he wants us to do the same!!

2 Cor. 11:13-14 ¹³ For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. (counterfeit) ¹⁵ It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.”

- **2 Thess. 2:9** “The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,”

The problem then is that when we accept one of Satan’s Counterfeits, we are out of the will of God. Follow me here...

Matthew 12:46–50 “While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him. ⁴⁷Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." ⁴⁸He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" ⁴⁹Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. ⁵⁰For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

Q. But how do I know what the ‘Will of the Father’ is?

1 Thessalonians 4:3–5 “It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; (this is God’s will!!!) 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...”

Q. Do you want to know the Will of God for your life? Here it is:

1. Be sanctified (consecrated, set apart, purified)
2. Avoid sexual immorality
3. Control your body in holiness and honor to God

The Problem is that many Christians are trying to live in two unmixable worlds at the same time!!! (2 Cor.6:14 “What fellowship can light have with darkness?”)

- This will never lead to a pure life that honors God, nor a happy one!!!

ILL> describe something disgusting that you have eaten

- Most people were spitting these out!! WHY??? B/c...
- Anything foul-tasting, distasteful, disgusting or offensive
 - i. It’s the same for God!! Lukewarm (blended) living is offensive to Him!

Revelation 3:15–16 “I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”

Four Counterfeits that Will Frustrate the Will of God for Your Life

Ephesians 5:3 “But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people.”

- The Standard for God’s people is very high!!!

• Like the Israelites in the desert, when you cheapen God’s best with the counterfeits of the world you will be ‘Stuck’ in a holding pattern in your life, outside God’s promised land for you

1. **Lust** – desiring another person that doesn’t belong to you; to seek that which is forbidden

Matt. 5:28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

- ‘Checking out’ the opposite sex will cheapen the ultimate will of God in your life!!

2. Pornography

- Talk about Counterfeits!!!!!! AA for sex – Airbrushes & Actresses!!!
- It’s not real!!!! It’s an imitation put forth by the ‘enemy of our souls’ to cheapen the real thing created by God!!

ILL> If you stand and stare at a gigantic piece of *White Chocolate Raspberry Truffle* cheesecake through a window that you can’t have, and then someone hands you a raspberry pop-tart, how good is that pop-tart going to taste??

- Pornography will cheapen God’s Best for you!!!

ILL> Does snacking ruin your dinner?!?! At the very least, when you satisfy your hunger before a meal with dessert, the main course no longer tastes so good!!

Now #2 typically leads to #3...

3. Masturbation (see LIFE info)

Q. Is it wrong if I am not thinking lustful thoughts? For men, just bodily maintenance??

Maybe think of it in these terms: (LIFE) “Sex w/ Self”

- Again, if sex was created by God to be enjoyed between a husband & wife, then this means masturbation is a Counterfeit, and therefore sinful!!!
- All three of these – lust, porn, masturbation – are part of a world of fantasy and are all a form of sexual gratification by yourself, obviously outside of marriage!!
 - I also realize that these three are not only temptations for singles!!! The enemy wants to destroy marriages with these counterfeits as well!!!

But, for the unmarried, acting on these three will inevitably culminate in acting on Number 4...

4. Pre-Marital Sex (Sexual Immorality) – any kind of sexual gratification w/ another person outside the covenant of marriage, even if w/in a consensual, committed relationship

Cultural Misconception: (another word – lie)

- “No baby, no disease, NO Problem!!!”

ILL> Like owning a very expensive car – you would take great care of it!

- If you let someone else drive it, you’d probably give them a whole bunch of rules to follow in the course of their enjoyment of the car, to ensure the safety of the car, right!?!?

- It’s the same way with our bodies. They were created with the ability to enjoy physical pleasure via sex, but only in proper use!!
- Do we really understand what sexual impurity does?? How it cheapens what God created?!?!? It both pollutes and dilutes something that was created pure!!

ILL> Would you

- Sex was created by God to consummate (bond) the marriage relationship.
 - a. (Read slowly) But like adhesive tapes, when used prematurely and repetitively on any surface not its final destination, its ability to bond effectively is severely deteriorated, even possibly removed altogether.

- If God's design for sexual enjoyment is for marriage, then any sexual gratification outside of marriage is also outside of God's Will!! It's a Counterfeit!!

Premarital Sex - Robert J. Collins in the Chicago Tribune, **1976** found this:

A study at a Midwestern school showed that 80% of the women who had intercourse hoped to marry their partner. Only 12% of the men had the same expectation.

- You see, it's a lie!!

"In marriage, sex is the most intimate expression of committed love which binds two people together. Outside of marriage, it has the opposite effect. It becomes a hindrance to the development of mature love. Sex hinders the development of solid communication. The ability to communicate at a deep level is vital in a relationship. Couples must be able to solve difficult problems, discuss deep issues, resolve conflict, and pray together. To think a kiss or a hug can solve a conflict rather than communicating effectively is like putting a band-aid on a broken bone.

Solid relationships are built on mutual trust and respect. When sex enters the picture, trust and respect can be lost. When a guy pushes a girl too far, she loses her trust in him. Her trust has resulted in her exploitation. The guy loses respect for the girl, knowing she is willing to give up her honor, self respect, and virginity for passionate lust. When trust and respect is lost, not much remains in the relationship.

However, when a couple makes the commitment to wait until marriage, a strong mutual trust develops which carries over into the marriage. Security and harmony define the relationship because both know the other will remain faithful even in difficult times. Mutual respect is developed when both parties prove themselves to be people of character who will not compromise their convictions, honor, and obedience to God. Trust and respect pay huge dividends in relationships.

The best way to keep from sexual immorality is to **develop the conviction** to have a pure relationship from the beginning. *It is difficult to reverse the process.* Establish your convictions and limits *at the beginning*, then maintain them throughout your dating relationship. Although it may be difficult, there is a tremendous reward that awaits you in marriage when you honor the Lord in your dating life."

So how do I do this? How do to keep myself Pure and Honor God with my body???

ILL> Video: "Triple X" – Sermon Spice

Four Preventative Measures that Will Help You Live a Life That Honors God

- Why Preventative? B/c the battle is won long before the first arrow is released!!!

1. Keep your Guard Up

- **ILL>** If you were in a boxing match, you wouldn't let your guard down. Yet in the fight we leave ourselves carelessly unprotected by not preparing ourselves with knowledge ahead of time

2. Reject ALL Counterfeits!!! (lust, porn, masturbation...)

- This means you have to endure **DG**: Delayed Gratification!!
 - Rejecting imitations *now* for God's Best later...

3. Flee ALL Sexual Immorality!!!

1 Corinthians 6:18–20 “Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. ¹⁹Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”

- Do we really understand what we are doing when we sin sexually???

4. Treat others with **Absolute Purity**

1 Tim. 5:1-2 “¹Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, ² older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.”

- It's a pretty whacked-out thought that your girlfriend is your sister until she becomes your wife!!?!?! Should that change the way you act/behave towards one another?

Conclusion:

Titus 3:3 “At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures.”

Most people who lose their battle with temptation do so because they don't start the fight soon enough. They let the Tempter have too many early victories. (This is a BATTLE!) They give the Evil One easy, uncontested wins by hardly thinking twice about viewing/hearing/reading things that weaken them, and dabbling with 'counterfeit pleasures' that edge them closer and closer to the crumbling cliff.

Suppose you are in a leaking boat. You are lounging on deck as the water seeps in a few bucketfuls an hour. No problem. Any fool can bail that out. Hour after hour you continue to snooze until suddenly you find yourself plunging towards the ocean floor. You then bail furiously but it's too late.

This disaster was not the product of some momentary weakness or inexplicable lapse in the last five seconds. It was completely avoidable, if only the danger had been taken seriously.

That's what it's like with temptation. Act soon enough, and you're safe. Take no action as temptation begins to seep in, and the danger slowly mounts until finally not even the strongest saint could survive the onslaught.

It's not what happens in a moment of weakness that is critical. What matters is what you do right now to protect yourself from those moments.

- I want to challenge you to make a **Decision** right now for sexual purity, whether you are in a relationship or not!! **“Decisions Determine Your Destiny”**
 - Don't settle for **Counterfeits!** Hold out for the Real Thing!!!
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