

The truth about sexual lust; Part 1.



Satan has hijacked human sexuality and used it against the race so effectively that a majority of people—especially religious ones, or those affected by religious ones—despise the very way that God has made them. Satan, through the agency of religion, has succeeded in making a majority of the race ashamed of the very hormones coursing through their bodies and making them who they are. And what has God made them? Male and female.

People are primarily identified by their gender. When a baby is born, the first question asked is: *Is it a boy or a girl?* Gender is so central to our identity that, upon the creation of the race it is the first thing noted by God—

So Elohim created humanity in His image; in the image of Elohim He created it: male and female He created them. —*Genesis 1:27*

As many of you know, I have written a book called *The Lie of Every Man's Battle* (still in manuscript form) that refutes a popular Christian book by Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker called *Every Man's Battle*. Arterburn and Stoeker's book essentially tells men that they are in a battle for their moral and spiritual lives simply by virtue of God having made them male. The battle created by these writers (*they* created it, God didn't), is the battle of a man against his lust (desire) for the opposing gender. The book unscripturally condemns men for obeying their natures and teaches them to do ridiculous things *against* that nature, such as bouncing their eyes. (There is a specific chapter in *Every Man's Battle* dedicated to teaching men how to bounce their eyes from feminine beauty. "All it takes is six weeks"—so say the authors.)

I wrote a book refuting this book because I hated the condemnation that was being heaped upon men. I not only hated it for the men, but also for the women who could not help but be adversely affected by their men striving to squelch a natural, God-given bent. The ensuing pressure, felt all around, eventually harms rather than helps both genders. Nothing is ever helped when religious prohibitions unauthorized by God repress natural human inclinations. Such prohibitions may work for five minutes or five months—or maybe even five years—but when the volcano finally does erupt (and it always does), the emotional and spiritual fallout is considerable.

This is so avoidable.

The following is an excerpt from *The Lie of Every Man's Battle*. The topic is sexual lust. May this and ensuing writings help both men and women come together in better understanding of themselves and of God. My desire is for males and females to live peaceably with one another.

Stranger things have happened. —MZ

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The Greek word for “lust,” used in the New Testament, is *epithumia*. This is the noun form of the word, and it simply means, “desire.” Who doesn’t desire things? Do you desire to be with your kids? That’s lust. Do you desire breakfast? That’s lust. Do you desire to be president of the school board? That’s lust. Do you desire money? That’s lust.

Do you desire to remove all lust from your life? That, too, is lust.



LUST.

Thus, lust itself (desire) is morally neutral. It can be bent toward either good or bad purposes. Jesus Himself lusted, as we shall see. The holy spirit lusts continually, as I will prove to you.

The verb form of *epithumia* is *epithumeo*. This word means to do the thing, that is, *to* lust. The verb form appears 16 times in the New Testament, and the noun 39 times. The *Concordant Version* translates the verb, variously, as “lust,” “yearn,” and “covet.” It’s the same exact Greek word, mind you; the definition (“desire”) never changes; there are only slight variations in usage. Collaterally, the CV translates the noun as either, “desire,” “coveting,” “lust,” and “yearning.” Again, same word, same definition, but only slight variations of usage. Sexual lust—that is, sexual desire—is also morally neutral, that is, it is not sin of itself. Sexual lust is a natural, daily occurrence in humans of both sexes. It is what one does with the sexual lust that determines whether or not that lust is sin.

Sexual lust is as natural and common an occurrence as lusting for (that is, desiring) food and drink. It is far

less accepted, obviously.

Sexual lust is supposed to be a terrible sin. It is supposed to be the downfall of men, especially married men. *Every Man’s Battle* assures married men that lusting after the opposite sex not only compromises their relationship with their wives, but also with God. Many religious wives (I know some) believe that their husbands should not even lust after *them*. The reason for this absurd belief is that the word “lust” is so strongly tied to sexual sin that religious people feel they must avoid it entirely. This unwarranted linking of lust and sin is so strong and so automatically assumed that it will be difficult for some to even read this particular newsletter; the mere appearance of the word “lust” triggers alarms, and these readers will fear becoming tainted or defiled.

THE MORAL NEUTRALITY OF THE WORD “LUST”

Galatians 5:17— “For the flesh is lusting (*epithumeo*) against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh.”

Who knew the spirit of God, itself, lusted? And yet here is proof. In this passage, both the spirit and the flesh are lusting. When the spirit lusts against the flesh, it is a good lusting, but when the flesh lusts against the spirit, it is bad. Lust itself, therefore, is morally neutral. It is neither angelic, nor demonic. It can be put to either good (natural) or evil use.

Jesus Himself lusted



In Luke 22:15, Jesus said to His disciples, “With yearning I yearn to be eating this Passover with you before My suffering.” The Greek word translated, “yearning” and “yearn” is the same word (*epithumia*) translated “desire,” and “lust” elsewhere in Scripture. Thus, Jesus, “with lusting, lusted to be eating the Passover” with His disciples.

Obviously, then—since Jesus did it—lusting itself cannot be a sin. The fact that the Word of God knows of *foolish and harmful* lusts, verifies this. Here is 1 Tim. 6:9—

Now those intending to be rich are falling into a trial and a trap and the many foolish and harmful desires (lusts,

epithumia) which are swamping humans in extermination and destruction.

If some lusts can be qualified as foolish and harmful, it stands to reason that other lusts are natural and/or good.

What do you crave?

There is one more Greek word carrying the idea of lust, though it is perhaps an even stronger term for an even stronger desire. I am speaking of the word *orexis* and its alternate form, *oregō*. These two words appear only four times in the Bible. Comparing two of the passages occurring in the same book of the Bible will again demonstrate how the same word can serve opposite ends.

1 Timothy 6:10— For the root of all of the evils is the fondness for money, which some, craving (*oregō*), were led astray from the faith and try themselves on all sides with much pain.

1 Timothy 3:1— Faithful is the saying: “If anyone is craving (*oregō*) the supervision, he is desiring an ideal work.”

As you can see, one can crave money, or crave to be a supervisor in the church. It is not the craving that is the problem, but what one does with it. Thus also with lust—even sexual lust.

Principles from hell

Let’s look into what our friends Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker have to say about sexual lust, as this will contrast with what God has just said about it.

FROM STEPHEN ARTERBURN:

We’ve put forth principles to help keep young single men from lusting (pg. 4).

Oh, capital, Stephen. I am sure all the young, single men out there will be happy to hear that you have developed principles whereby they will never lust after (desire) women again. So much for marriage, then. Or have you failed to think it through that far?

A desire (lust) for the opposite sex is the impetus for marriage. I’m not saying love takes a back seat but that, first and foremost, a man and a woman marry because of a mutual sexual desire (lust). Two people who merely love one other become roommates. The difference between roommates and spouses, therefore, is the presence of sexual

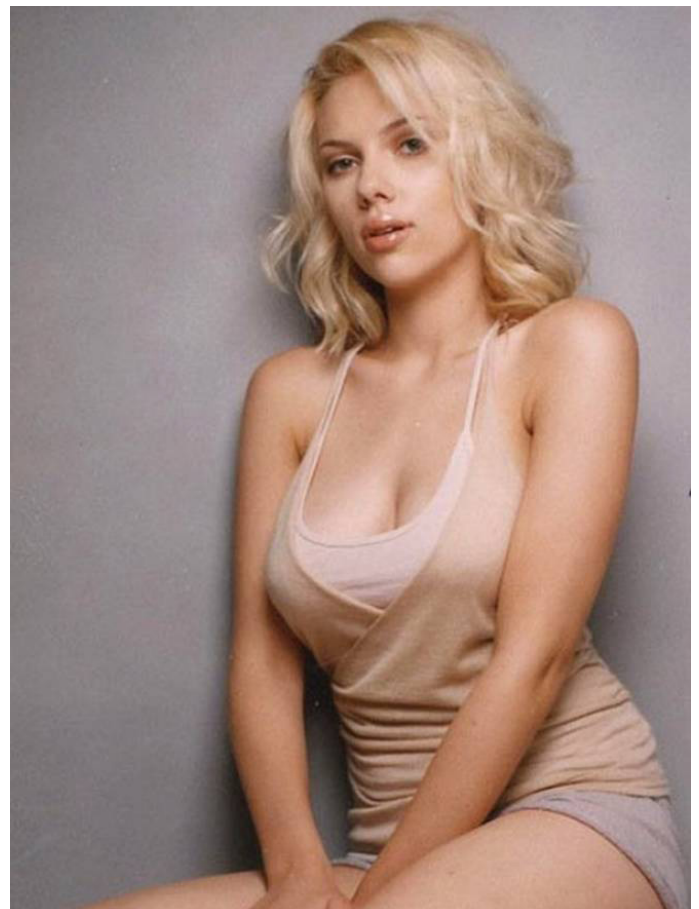
lust. Without this necessary biological impetus, the bridal industry collapses. The apostle Paul suggests as much in 1 Corinthians 7:2—

Yet, because of prostitutions, let each man have a wife for himself and each woman have her own husband.

In other words, because of the drive of both sexes to join penises with vaginas, let each man have a wife for himself, and vice-versa. This way, we will at least starve the illegal sexual intercourse business.

Sexual lust is no different than physical hunger. Both are lusts, and both are morally neutral. A hungry person can either steal food, or procure it by legal, moral means. Thus also with sexual lust. What does a man do with it? He can either engage in illegal sexual intercourse (in this context, prostitution), or obtain a wife. For a man with a normal sex drive, these are the two options Paul presents. Paul knows the lurid attraction of illegal sexual intercourse, especially the cult prostitution rife in Corinth, so he seeks to divert the lust into marriage.

Nowhere does Paul propose a third option, namely: “Stop lusting after the opposite sex.” No, that would be Stephen Arterburn’s ridiculous suggestion. Such a thing



never enters Paul’s mind, and neither does it enter the mind of any normal person. This is because the cessation of sexual lust would be *ab-normal*. Arterburn’s recommendation to eliminate sexual lust would be akin to someone recommending: “Stop wanting to eat; cease your desire for food.”

We discover Paul’s means of handling sexual lust in 1 Corinthians 7:8-9—

Now I am saying to the unmarried and the widows, that it is ideal for them if ever they should be remaining even as I. Yet if they are not controlling themselves, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to be on fire.

The “fire” of this context is lust for illegal sexual intercourse. Paul suggests in the previous three verses that not everyone possesses the gift of not lusting sexually after anyone. Concerning sexual relations, Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 7:5-7—

Do not deprive one another, except sometime it should be by agreement for a period, that you should have leisure for prayer, and you may be the same again, lest Satan may be trying you because of you incontinence. Now this I am saying as a concession, not as an injunction. For I want all humans to be as I myself, also, but each has his own gracious gift from God, one indeed, thus, yet one thus.

Again, from Stephen Arterburn:

We’ve put forth principles to help keep young single men from lusting (pg. 4).

Paul would roll his eyes at the very suggestion of “keeping young single men from lusting.” Sexual lust is a natural human possession given by God for the continuance of the race. Only a special gift of God—*not* a list of principles and techniques—can abrogate it. Thus, Paul does not say, “Here are some principles that will enable you to eliminate sexual lust.” To Paul, therefore, sexual lust is not to be—*shouldn’t be; can’t be*—eliminated, but rather channeled.

Paul presents two channels for sexual lust (this does not mean that there are *only* two): 1) illegal sexual intercourse (“prostitutions”), and 2) marriage. That prostitutions are listed as the second option (instead of “just stop lusting”), reiterates our finding that sexual lust is a morally neutral human life-force needing channeled, not eliminated.

Will Stephen Arterburn please be consistent?



Stephen Arterburn



Fred Stoeker

Stephen Arterburn recommends the elimination of sexual lust, at least in all single men. Since this is so, here is the obvious question: If Stephen Arterburn should succeed—via his miraculous principles, in conjunction with Fred Stoeker’s maniacal eye-bouncing techniques—to completely eliminate sexual lust from the lives of single men, then by what means will these single men *ever* desire a wife?

I assume that the reason Stephen Arterburn wants to eliminate sexual lust is because he assumes it to be a sin. If sexual lust is a sin, then it’s always a sin. If it’s always a sin, then looking at a woman with sexual lust is always wrong, even if that woman is a potential wife—or an actual one, for that matter. Surely Stephen Arterburn cannot recommend to young men: “Only desire a woman sexually (that is, lust for her), if you know for certain she is to become your future wife.” For one thing, how could a man know whether or not a woman will become his future wife? Even if he could know, the woman would not *then* be his wife; she would only be a potential wife. In such a case, we are still considering a single man lusting after a woman who is not his wife, a thing which both Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker believe to be wrong:

We’ve put forth principles to help keep young single men from lusting (pg. 4).

The only way out of this conundrum is the natural way out: allow the sexual lust. This is Paul’s default belief. Again, nowhere does Paul advocate the elimination of sexual lust. This is also the Scriptural solution to Arterburn and Stoeker’s self-made conundrum. This solution allows sexual lust to be what it is: a part of human

nature that only a counteracting gift of God—rather than a list of principles and techniques—can eliminate. This solution lets a man sexually desire women (acknowledging God’s creation rather than battling it with religious prohibitions), then count on the grace of God and the holy spirit within to channel that desire (lust) toward legitimate outlets.

Human beings are implanted by God with sexual needs. Sexual lust is the outward expression—the manifestation—of this need. Sexual lust does not, by default, lead to rape and adultery. In fact, it rarely does. This is because sexual lust, itself, is not sin. What it generally leads to, in most of the population, is marriage. Sexual lust is the reason people marry.

Without physical hunger, there is no eating. Without sexual lust, there is no sex. Without sex, there is no marriage.

Is every male who lusts sexually a sex addict?

FRED STOEKER:

A thunderbolt hit me when [a Christian author] outlined the three levels of [sexual] addiction. (Keep in mind that this wasn’t a Christian book);

Level 1: Contains behaviors that are regarded as normal, acceptable, or tolerable. Examples include masturbation, homosexuality, and prostitution.



Did you notice that the examples of Level 1 sexual addiction place masturbation—which most human beings practice—right along with the relatively rarer practices of homosexuality and prostitution? I would be willing to wager that the vast majority of men reading this article do not engage in homosexual acts or use prostitutes. But if masturbation is a level one sexual addiction, then most of us are en route to rehab.

I breathe air all the time. Does that make me an oxygen addict? I eat at least six times a day, every day, and have done so for half a century. Does this make me a food addict? I sleep a third of my life away, as does nearly everyone else on the planet. Are we all addicted to sleep? I constantly seek beauty in the world, including from, but not restricted to, members of the fair sex. Am I a sex addict? Or do I only *become* a sex addict when people try to cure me of my “affliction” by guiltting me to death and threatening me with God’s wrath?

FROM STEPHEN ARTERBURN:

► If we categorize being *totally* pure and holy as the zero level [of addiction], most Christian men we know would fall somewhere between Level 0 and Level 1.

► Men receive a chemical high from sexually charged images—a hormone called epinephrine is secreted into the bloodstream, which locks into the memory whatever stimulus is present at the time of the emotional excitement. I’ve counseled men who become emotionally and sexually stimulated just from entertaining thoughts of sexual activity.

Imagine that. Stephen Arterburn has actually counseled men who actually become emotionally and sexually stimulated from entertaining thoughts of sexual activity. Who could have guessed?

ARTERBURN: What is the problem, sir?

PATIENT: Whenever I think about sexual activity, I become sexually stimulated.

ARTERBURN: I have seen this before—in fact, I have seen it in every single man I’ve ever met. Welcome to Level 1 addiction. You are safe here, and can tell me everything. Search your soul; I am sensing you are riddled with many more addictions.

PATIENT: (voice quavering) Yes. When ... when I think about food ... I become *hungry*.

ARTERBURN: There, there, now. This is a place of confession and cleansing. You have a Level 1 food addiction. God has brought you here; I charge only \$150 per hour.



I must never think of **Scarlett Johansson**
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And yet I suspect that, even now, you are holding out on me.

PATIENT: (quietly weeping) You are a man of great spiritual insight. Once, while attending a Jerry Seinfeld performance, I ... I started ... *laughing*.

ARTERBURN: (shaking head) You have deep psychological problems that will take years to work through.

PATIENT: Save me, Stephen!

STEPHEN ARTERBURN:

► From my counseling experience, I believe it's often true that those men living at Level 1 or worse have deep psychological problems that will take years to work through.

► Another way of looking at the scope of the problem is to picture a bell curve. According to our experiences, we figure around 10 percent of men have no sexual-temptation problem with their eyes and their minds. At the other end of the curve, we figure there's another 10 percent of men who are sexual addicts and have a serious problem

with lust. They've been so beaten and scarred by emotional events that they simply can't overcome that sin in their lives. They need more counseling and a transforming washing by the Word. The rest of us comprise the middle 80 percent, living in various shades of gray when it comes to sexual sin.

My first impulse, when Seven Arterburn writes, "we figure around 10 percent of men have no sexual-temptation problem with their eyes and their minds," is to ask which morgue he visited. But then I thought, strictly speaking, he might be right to say that only 10 percent of men have a *problem* with sexual-temptation involving their eyes and minds. After all, it is the most natural thing in the world for the eyes and minds of men to gravitate toward sexual things. The only men who could possibly have a problem with it are 1) men mired in religions, and 2) men who read *Every Man's Battle* (sorry for the redundancy). I was encouraged, therefore, that perhaps this odd bunch of nature-denying males really does comprise only 10 percent of the male population.

The poor kid at the addiction meeting

Men receive a chemical high from sexually charged images—a hormone called epinephrine is secreted into the bloodstream, which locks into the memory whatever stimulus is present at the time of the emotional excitement. I've counseled men who become emotionally and sexually stimulated just from entertaining thoughts of sexual activity. —*Stephen Arterburn*

One wonders why men responding naturally—and therefore legitimately—to the presence of a God-given hormone, need professional counseling. I guess that if a man has it hammered into him long enough and hard enough by a guilt-ridden, fear-based society, that his natural desire for women (that is, his sexual lust for the opposite gender resulting from the secretion of a God-given hormone) is wrong, then to counseling he will go. I propose to you that it is this very sort of badgering and the requisite condemnation that creates addicts in the first place.

At the invitation of a friend, I once attended a 10-step meeting. Being free of any addictions myself (thankfully, no one had ever badgered or condemned me for being human), I sat in as an observer as part of a literal circle of men confessing their addictions to one other.

Some men did have hardcore addictions, either to alcohol, drugs, pornography, or approval. But there was one kid there who, like me, was just hanging out. I had seen him before; he was part of a Christian rock band serving the church of which this group's leader was pastor.

Standard procedure at groups like this is to go around the circle taking turns sharing. Introductions proceed by formula, with each man saying, "Hello, my name is *so-and-so*, I am a believer in Jesus Christ, and I struggle with *whatever*"—and then the man launches into that week's trials and victories.

Not many eighteen year-olds suffer addictions, and this kid was no exception. But when one sits in such a circle, one feels compelled to name some addiction—any addiction—in order to feel a part of the group. So when the kid's turn came, he said: "Hello, my name is Justin, I believe in Jesus Christ, and I struggle with lusting after women, in real life and on computer screens."

Liar, liar, pants on fire. I could tell that Justin did not struggle with this at all. I could tell by the slight smile curling up his mouth that he only *said* he struggled with it.

Why the pose? Because, in this group, he was expected to struggle. What was he supposed to say?

"Hello, my name is Justin, I am a believer in Jesus Christ, and I lust after beautiful women all the time, but, to tell you the truth, I don't struggle with it at all. In fact, I enjoy every second of it. Life is so wonderful when I notice all the beautiful women in the world; there is nothing like a beautiful woman to make a gray day happy. Do you see me out there raping women and abusing little girls? Not me. I'm just your average, red-blooded male, enjoying God's creation."

I *wish* he had said that. It would have made my day. Instead, I had to make my own day. When it came my turn, I should have said, "pass." Judging by the looks I got when I did speak, I'd have been much better off.

"Hello," I said. "My name is Martin Zender, I believe in Jesus Christ, and I struggle with the fact that I have no struggles."

Fortunately, looks do not kill. Only one person laughed.

It was the kid. —MZ

(*To be continued.*)

