



Part 5: A Fine Line: Lust vs. Love

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Why does he have to take off his shirt yet again? Doesn't he know that women are gawking at him? Doesn't he know that it is making some of us uncomfortable? That some of us are thinking thoughts that are...well, you get the idea. (I have got to stop watching those butter commercials.)

Yep, a butter commercial. Or how about milkshakes? Or better yet, dusting spray. It seems no matter when you turn on the TV there is someone trying to sell you something using sex to get your attention. Years ago I got so tired of all the horrible commercials and TV shows and movies that I cut the cord to my TV three times only to re-wire it later. Eventually I just got rid of my TV and chose not to watch it for five years. Sure, I watched it in hotels and with my friends and family - but in my own home, I had a problem. Without the accountability of a roommate, spouse or kids, there was just too much that was taking me down the road of lust, which often turned my thoughts to sex. Some of these shows and commercials that seem innocent were actually attacking my mind through my eyes, my ears and my mouth. Where were the TV shows about caring for others without anything in return? Where were the commercial messages that said love your neighbor, not try to jump on them? And due to this constant attack from our TVs (and other media outlets), how is anyone to know the difference? Where is the fine line?

LUST IS:

Lust is always self-focused. When we lust we are in a battle of seeking only to pleasure ourselves. We can lust not only sexually but also for things, jobs, or relationships. We can become so self-focused in our attempts to get these things that we are blinded at the journey...the journey towards death. Because this world will never satisfy you, you will NEVER get enough. Whether what starts with a porn magazine escalates to watching it on the computer, buying a few pairs of shoes turns to dozens, reading one romance novel to joining an addicts club, lust can take over. Lust will begin to feed on your self-focused desires. You will find yourself talking others into become a part of your destructive journey as well. I mean if someone is also committing the same sin, at least you are not alone. But eventually lust will tear down your relationships too and you will BE ALONE.

LOVE IS:

Love is other-focused. When we love, our goals, our purpose, our desires are to please the other person. Whether it's helping someone with their yard work, serving at church, taking a grocery cart back to the store for someone, or dating with respect and honor, all are other focused. When you love someone, you will want the best for him or her. You will want to lift them toward Christ. You will want to build a bridge, not tear one down. When you love another person, you are not thinking of what you are going to get out of it but how God gets the glory. Love does not go too far sexually, yell, intentionally hurt, lie, or cheat. If you have pure love, in all things you will want to show the love that Christ has shown to you. Love leads to relationships and NOT BEING ALONE.

The Fine Line Revealed:

In order to identify the fine line of lust vs. love:



Q: When you are watching TV, reading a book, or going to a movie, ask yourself is what I am watching or reading lifting up Christ or pulling him (and me) down? Remember, what we see and absorb can become who we are. We have a tendency to lust because of the things we are seeing and reading. It's the way the enemy gets us.

For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world (1 John 2:16).

Q: When I spend time with others, what is my goal? How is my attitude when I spend time with them? Am I angry if someone else gets a promotion and I didn't? Am I jealous of the things they are able to purchase or own? Remember, lust is also more than just about sex - it can quickly be anything we idolize, anything we worship other than God.

Then in the nations where they have been carried captive, those who escape will remember me—how I have been grieved by their adulterous hearts, which have turned away from me, and by their eyes, which have lusted after their idols. They will loathe themselves for the evil they have done and for all their detestable practices (Ezekiel 6:9).

Q: When I look upon the opposite sex, do I allow my mind to wander? Do I bind the enemy beforehand, to help me not go there in my mind? God says our lust in our eyes is the same as adultery with our bodies. God takes this very seriously...do you? And remember folks, it's also our responsibility to dress appropriately and behave modestly so that we aren't a part of the problem.

But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Matthew 5:28).

I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl (Job 31:1).

Q: Do I have friends who can hold me accountable with my struggles of lust? Am I praying about my struggles, seeking Christ in all things?

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well (Matthew 6:33).

Bottom line, in lusting one will always seek to please oneself, building your own kingdom instead of God's Kingdom. Start working toward God's Kingdom today by asking for God to help you. Start serving in your church or community. Only when we help others, when we see the pain and brokenness, can we break the bondage and slavery caused by lust. Remember to love, because God is love. Start using your eyes and ears to hear and see God so you can love and be loved by Him.

However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Corinthians 2:9).

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mentor, Kris has a heart to reach and grow leaders so they will in turn reach and grow others. She is the author of three books: *Singles and Relationships: A 31-Day Experiment* (co-authored with Dick Purnell of Single Life Resources); *From the Manger to the Cross: The Women in Jesus' Life*; and the most recent, *Jesus, Single Like Me with Study Questions* (includes a leader's guide and conference/retreat of the same name). Kris is currently working on her fourth book: *FAQ's of Singles Ministry* coming 2013.

TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries helps churches, pastors and single adult leaders evaluate, develop and support their single adult ministries through high-energy speaking engagements, results-oriented consulting and training and leadership development conferences and seminars. Click here to request a FREE "How to Start a Single Adult Ministry" guide.

FromHisHands.com Ministries is Kris' speaking ministry. If you've ever heard her speak, you know that Kris is the kind of speaker who keeps the crowd captivated, shares great information and motivates people to make a difference in the lives of those around them! She speaks to all church audiences on everything from "first impression" ministry to women's topics to singles and young adults. She can speak on a Sunday morning, at a woman's retreat or for a single adults conference. Bring Kris to your church today!

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