

Weapons for the War Against Lust and Sexual Immorality (Part 4)

Weapon #13: Find the Escape Hatch.

1 Corinthians 10:13 promises: *When you are tempted, God will provide a way out.*

Since God always provides an escape hatch, the task is to find one and use it. But a word of warning: some Christians wait too long and bypass the exit. The time to deal with lust is when the lust ritual begins, not when you are driving down the cliff.

Do some analysis of your lust rituals. Dissect the pattern of your behavior. Before you sin you always go through a ritual of preparation. One fellow I know stumbled every time there was a lot of stress in his life. Just prior to exams or major projects, he would stay up watching late night (read "pornographic") TV or would "find himself" driving near a pornographic book store. Another guy I know is easily tempted when he travels and is away from his wife and family, staying in hotel rooms. He conveniently "forgets" to ask the hotel clerk to block HBO to his room and often finds himself staying in hotels that "happen" to have a nude nightclub next door.

Why did David invite Bathsheba over for a quiet evening in the presidential suite and ignore the warning from his attendants (2 Samuel 11:2-3). He conveniently missed the escape hatch. Joseph, on the other hand, ran out of the house when Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him (Genesis 39:11-12). The Bible commands, *"Flee the evil desires of youth"* (2 Timothy 2:22).

One of the men in our church body knows his lust rituals. When he finds himself starting down that road, he has a list of men that he can call. He gets one of them on the phone and tells him that he is being tempted. They pray together and talk about how he can find the escape hatch. It works!

Weapon #14: The 3F Brothers (sounds Mafia related!) ? Fact/Faith/Force.

Romans 6 is a powerful passage for overcoming sin. There are basically three steps (the 3F Brothers) that we need to utilize to overcome sin:

Fact: *"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, {Or be rendered powerless} that we should no longer be*

slaves to sin" (Romans 6:6). Every Christian is to know, not feel, this fact. A Christian has been crucified with Christ (in spite of what your experience tells you) and Christ now lives in him. God's point of view is this: the sinful and selfish nature within us was crucified with Christ.

Faith: *"In the same way, reckon yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus"* (Romans 6:11). The key word here is an accounting term: "Reckon. Count. Consider." We must lay hold of this fact and appropriate it to our lives. Take the crucial step of picturing yourself as dead to sin and alive to God. Faith can often take root in Biblical self-talk. Talk to yourself in the following way:

It is sheer nonsense to think that in Christ I cannot control my physical passions. All my unhealthy urges and longings died with Christ. I am raised up to a new life of righteousness. Every wholesome desire is under His rule and designed for His purpose. With Christ's supernatural power, I can set my mind on the Spirit rather than on the flesh (Romans 8:5-7). I once again reckon myself dead to sin and ALIVE to JESUS!

Force: *"Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness"* (Romans 6:12-13). This is the step of obedience. With each action the Christian chooses to make parts of his body a force for God or a force for Satan. Each gaze of one's eyes, each word of one's tongue, each touch of one's hand, each step of one's foot is either for God or Satan. What a Christian does with the physical parts of his or her body shows whether or not faith is put into force.

Weapon #15: Chase Off the Alien Thoughts.

Why do evil thoughts come with strange force to a solid Christian, who desires God's best? Some of the thoughts which enter our minds are not from ourselves. These thoughts come from invaders from another kingdom (spirits of lust from the kingdom of evil). These thoughts are not yours. They have no place in you.

A good mental exercise is to picture the demons as imaginary aliens. When thoughts come into my mind, I say to myself, "That thought didn't come from me." Then I say to the Lord, "Send that alien back into space. Get him out of here!" and

the Lord runs him off. Once in a while the alien will try to return. I just ask the Lord to chase him away again and He does. A mental exercise like this gets results because it assigns alien thoughts to an alien power to be dealt with by a supernatural Lord.

Weapon #16: Keep an Arsenal of Bullet Prayers on Hand.

Sometimes Satan attacks without warning while you are involved in the normal pursuits of life. While you are witnessing, driving, praying, teaching, playing, or counseling. Totally out of the blue. There has been no time to find the escape hatch. What do you do?

An arsenal of bullet prayers can make all the difference at a moment of unexpected temptation:

- "Help."
- "Lord, get my mind in the right place."
- "Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from the evil one."
- "Lord greater is He who is in me, than he who is in the world. Show yourself powerful."

The Scripture says, *Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me* (Psalm 50:15). Bullet prayers work! Have a few on hand for quick emergencies.

Weapon #17: Change Your View of Women

Most people who are addicted to pornography have a corrupted view of the opposite sex. This view of the opposite sex permits the addict to use them as objects for pleasure.

Another way of putting it is this: All men want to be worshipped by a woman. In pornography we find (or imagine) a woman who is always available to us, always unclothed, ready to meet our need, our desires, and our fantasies. In other words, they worship us!

This is not reality and it creates a habit of using women as slaves and objects rather

than people made in God's image. This view spills over into the way we relate to our wives, our girl friends, or our mother. We begin to view all woman as pleasure vassals. We create mental mistresses. We create unrealistic expectations. We become angry when the women in our life don't live up to our fantasies.

See "An Affair of the Mind" by Laurie Hall for how porno affects your wife (1-800-FL-TODAY)

Women were created in the image of God as people. They were not created to worship you or to meet your needs or to fulfill your fantasies. They were created to worship God, not you. Change your view!

Weapon #18: The Power of Jesus' Name.

Charles Mylander (author of *Running the Red Lights*) calls this "The Son Screen." The concept of using the name of Christ is based on passages like:

I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it (John 14:12-14).

Peter prayed to God, "Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." (Acts 4:30).

Do these Scriptures mean that we should actually say the phrase "in Jesus' name" when praying or doing wonders? As we look through the book of Acts at examples of prayer, healing, miracles and deliverance, we are struck by how little the phrase "in the name of Jesus" actually appears. In fact, in only two cases out of all the prayers and miracles recorded do we find the phrase "in the name of Jesus" used (Acts 3:6; 16:18). So avoid judging people who don't always end their prayers with "in the name of Jesus we pray."

The use of Jesus' name is not a mantra or a powerful spell. In the New Testament to use a person's name assumed:

•

That you actually had a relationship with the individual whose name you used.

The name means nothing, if you do not. If you do not have a relationship with Jesus, using his name will not give you special powers (e.g. Acts 19:5,13-17).

-

That all authority of that person stood behind you for defense and offense.

This aspect of a name is hard for us to grasp in our individualized, anti-authoritarian culture. The closest analogy that we have is in the military. If I say, "I am functioning under the orders of General Gray," then all the authority of General Gray lies behind me.

-

That you were actually carrying on the work of that individual, not your own work or agenda.

If you used a person's name in ancient times, it assumed that you were functioning in the way that the individual would want. If not, then the persons upon whom you were using the name could legitimately ignore you and there would be an accounting from the one whose name you used.

Jesus' name has great power, but it is not a magic formula. However, if you have a relationship with Jesus and you are actually carrying on His work (and overcoming temptation *is* His work), then you can use the Son Screen: "In the name of Jesus, away from me, Satan!" The power of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ can make a noticeable difference.

Weapon #19: Blood of Jesus.

Many Christians down through the centuries have testified that the blood of Jesus is a mighty weapon against temptation. They will use the phrase "blood of Jesus" in their prayers to God or rebukes to Satan. For example: "Lord, protect me by your blood." To the best of my knowledge, there are no examples of "the blood of Jesus"

being used in prayers in the New Testament.

Nevertheless, the concept of reminding God or Satan or ourselves of the blood of Christ is a biblical one. It is tied up with the whole idea of covenant and the covenant ceremony of blood being sprinkled on the participants (Exodus 24:4-8; Leviticus 8:30; Hebrews 12:24). In the suzerain-vassal treaties of ancient times, the blood of the covenant placed the subjects under the protection of the king. If an enemy attacked the subjects, then he attacked the king.

Understood in this manner, we can remind ourselves and the evil one that we are children of God living under the blood of Jesus: "Satan, you have no part of me, because I am God's child. Christ's blood was shed for me and I am sprinkled by His own life blood. I am under the protect of the Most High God. When you attack me, you attack my King and He will come to rescue me just as Abraham rescued Lot (Genesis 14)."

Weapon #20: Go for a Positive Addiction.

-

Keep busy with righteous things. David fell to temptation, because he was not actively involved in what he should have been doing as king. The passage on Bathsheba begins with *"In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war... David remained in Jerusalem"* (2 Samuel 11:1). If David had the same passion to be with his army that Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, had (2 Samuel 11:11), he would never have fallen into the sins of adultery and murder.

Build healthy habits: frequent Christian bookstores, exercise, try slow-pitch softball, go to Bible studies. Do these things and you will avoid much temptation.

-

Overcome a misplaced desire with a righteous one:

If you lust, then the Bible tells you to get married: 1 Corinthians 7:1,2,8,9; 1 Timothy 5:11-15.

If you steal, then the Bible tells you to get a job and be generous:
Ephesians 4:28

If you curse, then the Bible tells you to practice speaking edifying words: Ephesians 4:29.

Learn how to substitute a bad habit with a good ones. Go for the positive addiction.

Weapon #21: Spiritual Warfare Prayer.

Spiritual warfare prayer combines many of the elements we have just discussed. Here is an example of a short warfare prayer from Bill Gothard:

"Heavenly Father, I ask you in the name and through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ to rebuke Satan for tempting me to lust (or lie, be rebellious, etc.). For it is written: *Flee the evil desires of youth* (or *Obey them that have rule over you* and *Lie not one to another*, etc.).

Does a believer have power to rebuke Satan? Can Satan be censured, sent away, or limited by the prayer of a child of God. Here are some verses on the believer's authority in Christ:

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority (Colossians 2:9-10).

In order that you may know God's incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come (Ephesians 1:19-21)

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly

realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand (Ephesians 6:10-13).

The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective (James 5:16b).

Should a Christian say "Father, rebuke Satan for me" or "Satan, I rebuke and command you"? There are two sides to this debate. The "Father, rebuke him" side points to 2 Peter 2:10-11 and Jude 8-10 and says we should be very wary of tackling Satan on our own. Angels don't even rebuke Satan by their own power or name. They say, "The Lord rebuke you!"

The other side of the debate turns to Acts 16:18 and points to the fact that Paul said "*I command you in the name of Jesus.*" If Paul could command an evil spirit, why can't we? Read the Scriptures on this issue and decide about the proper wording to use. But whatever you decide to do, ATTACK through prayer! Don't just sit there and be a victim. You are a son of God, not a pincushion!!!

If you are going to do warfare prayer, you should do some spiritual preparation: Use Ephesians 6:10-20 as a prayer of preparation. Here is an example of how you can use Ephesians 6:10-20 to prepare yourself for battle:

Father, I thank you that you hear my prayer as you always hear my voice. For I am your special child, your chosen One in the Beloved. I thank you that the Blood of Christ covers me and for the precious covenant relationship which I have with you by grace. I now equip myself to stand against the belt of truth girded around my waist. I know the truth because I know your Word. You've grant me revelation of who you are and enlightened my mind and heart. I walk in light and not in darkness. I stand today with the breast plate of righteousness. The righteousness of Jesus earned by the cross covers me both front and back. I stand too in the right character which is mine by the power of the Holy Spirit. I have sought you with my whole heart and walked in the law of Christ as far as I have understood.

I stand today with my feet shod with the good news of peace. The peace of God is my firm footing. There is no war with you. You are always my friend, my helper, my refuge, my commander, my strength, my rock. Nothing and no one can or will change that. Satan cannot disturb my secure relationship with you. Thank you for the good new of peace.

Satan, I stand today with the shield of faith. I dip it and soak it in the promises of God. And I claim everyone of God's covenant promises as my own to extinguish your flaming lies.

I stand today with the helmet of the hope of salvation. My head will not fall downcast, rather I hold it up in full assurance of victory, Christ's coming, your defeat, my resurrection and heavenly home. I will be glorified in Christ Jesus and may the brightness of my helmet crest remind you of the brightness of my glorification and the colorless, darkness of your ultimate defeat.

I stand today with the sword of the Spirit of God. Samson's jaw bone slew a thousand. Today with a mightier weapon I slay whatever evil comes against me. God's word is my defensive and my offensive weapon. Sharper than any sword may it pierce your schemes asunder, may it break your weapons in two as they come against me.

It is written,"

Once you are prepared then proceed:

Satan, I now rebuke you in the name of Jesus, the Holy One, the Christ of God, your defeater. (Or Lord, I ask you to rebuke Satan for.....)

Satan, you have no place in.....(my life, my family, this situation, etc.) because..... (quote scripture or spiritual truth).

The prayer of a righteous man (or a struggling Christian standing in the righteousness of Christ) can be very forceful, because we have such a powerful, loving God who wants to deliver us from our sin! You can overcome lust and sexual immorality. God delights to help those who call upon Him!