

# 1 On Lust (Three Articles)

Every Christian has heard that it is wrong to lust after a man/woman. We will divide our discussion of lust into three parts: (1) Of the definition of lust; (2) Of the sinfulness of sexual lust; (3) Of whether Christians should accept sexual lust if they wish to follow Christ.

## 1.1 Whether lust is a desire?

**Objection 1** It seems that lust describes a sinful sensual appetite because the Bible uses the word "lust" to represent activities that are morally wrong.

**Objection 2** It seems that lust represents sinful passions because people in society always apply a negative connotation to this word in society. No one says that they lust over a healthy appetite.

**On the contrary**, the Greek noun for lust "epithymia" translates as "desire" without specifying whether the thing being desired is sinful or not.

**I answer that**, when people see the word "lust" in the Bible, all this means is desire. Without putting it in any context, the action of lusting is not wrong or right in and of itself. Anyone who continues to believe that lust is wrong is being a slave to language as I refer to in another article.

**Reply to Objection 1** People believe that lust is biblically wrong because the translators of the Bible translated the word "epithymia" as "lust" when the Bible was judging a certain behavior as morally wrong. However, we can use the word for lust "epithymia" to describe a lust for God. Therefore, lust does not describe a sinful sensual appetite.

**Reply to Objection 2** People believe that lust is wrong because people associate it with sinful desires such as "lusting after your neighbor's wife" or "lusting for revenge". Stripped of these negative connotations, there is no reason for anyone to view lust as wrong. For this reason, it is good practice to differentiate between the meaning behind the word "lust" and our associations with the word "lust" so that we do not cloud our judgment with our own psychological biases.

## 1.2 Whether it is sinful to lust after a man or woman?

**Objection 1** According to Matthew 5:27-29, Jesus states that anyone who "looks at a woman lustfully" already commits the sinful act of adultery with her. Therefore, it is sinful to lust after a man or woman. **On the contrary**, a second look at Matthew 5:27-29 reveals that Jesus is talking about adultery ie. a violation of a relationship between a married couple. **I answer that**,

Using the ESV version of the Bible, this passage states that

## 1.3 Textual Analysis

Now, let's examine Matthew 5:27-29 taken from the Sermon on the Mount.

You have heard that it was said, You shall not commit adultery. But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.” - Matthew 5:27-29 (ESV)

”Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.” - Matthew 5:27-29 (KJV)

I am no expert on ancient Greek. I am no Biblical scholar at all. Yet, to anyone reading the verse, it should be clear that Jesus is talking about adultery, which is a man having sex with another man’s wife (or a woman having sex with another woman’s husband). For this reason, the word ”woman” in the passage should be viewed as ”wife”. This passage indicates that the man already commits adultery in his heart by having the intention to commit the deed before he actually carries out adultery with a married woman. This passage is not for guys and girls who are not married.

This is the general gist you need to know to prepare yourself against someone who’s still plugged into the normal church culture.

## 1.4 Arguments

### 1.4.1 Scriptural Arguments

**Matthew 5:28** It Matthew 5:28 demonstrates that lust is wrong.

- Description of argument: *”Matthew 5:28 clearly shows that lust is wrong.”*
- I respond: ”Taking an appropriate look of the entire Sermon of the Mount and Jewish views of adultery, it’s clear that Jesus is talking about lust within the context of a married relationship.”

The future wife argument

- Description of argument: *”By lusting after a woman, you’re committing adultery against your future wife. Would your future wife want you to look at the woman you’re looking at now?”*
- I respond: ”First off, you don’t have a future wife just like you don’t have a future job or a future \$1,000,000 salary. Imagine that you’re single and that you die now. Then it would appear that you don’t have a future wife. Adding ”future” in front of a word doesn’t make it real. And since you can’t commit adultery with someone that isn’t real, you can’t sin through this verse.
- I respond: ”If the future wife argument was valid, you wouldn’t be able to know if the person you’re lusting after is indeed your future wife, so you can never know if you’re sinning. I suppose people who use the future wife

argument imagine that right after your wedding day, all your past lusts of other woman suddenly come and bite your ass to fulfill Matthew 5:28.”

- I respond: “You wouldn’t be able to marry anyone (out of your own free will) if you were trying not to sin under the future wife argument. Unless you plan to be arranged into marriage, you will most likely marry your significant other because you have an intense passion for her to be your wife. With the way most people word the future wife argument, this could count as an act of coveting since you are wanting someone to be yourself when she does not belong to you.”

The sin against oneself argument

- Description of argument: *“By lusting after her, you’re sinning against your own body. It doesn’t matter if you are married or not.”*
- I respond: “Jesus mentions that he who sins sexually sins against his own body. However, we can’t talk about the implication of sexual sin before we establish what should be considered as sexual sin. Refer to my response to Matthew 5:28 for why lusting as a single man should not be considered sexual sin.”

The idolatry argument

- Description of argument: *“It doesn’t matter what your interpretation of Matthew 5:28 is, the larger context of the Bible shows that lusting after a girl is idolatry. You’re valuing the creation over the creator.”*
- I respond: “In most Christian discussions, we seem to be battling over who has the bigger context. You often here people claiming that they have the biggest context and that they’re taking into account more things. All of this aside, this argument fails because it assumes that the person with lust is valuing the creation over the creator. It’s perfectly reasonable if not more likely that a Christian feels in awe of a beautiful girl just like he feels in awe of a beautiful sunset. In both cases, the person is grateful for the creator as much as he is grateful for the girl in his life. Simply because he is passionate about having a sexual relationship with her does not mean he is an idolator.”

The disingenuous argument

- Description of argument: *“You’re just saying this because you want to give yourself an excuse to lust as a single man.”*
- I respond: “This response doubts the integrity of the person who’s proposing that lust isn’t sinful instead of dealing with the argument.”

## 1.5 Mindsets of the Interloculator

Now let’s go over the mindsets you’ll encounter from those plugged into the church.

But let’s think through the mindset of someone who’s **unplugged**.