

CAPITOL STUDIES

FEBRUARY 10, 2021 • WEEK 5



SEVEN DEADLY SINS AND CIVIL SERVANTS

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Verse of the Week

1 Thess. 4:3-5

For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God.

Fighting Lust (Part II)



VALENTINE'S DAY (FOUR DAYS AWAY) is a holiday¹ filled with romance and roses, candlelight dinners, and chocolate-filled, heart-shaped boxes. Mail carriers' bags bulge as big, expensive cards, rimmed in red lace, are mailed to multiple millions. Americans buy one billion cards per year (85 percent of which are purchased by women). Schoolchildren share hard-candy hearts inscribed with mini-messages, even shorter than Twitter tweets. Messages like "B MINE" fill their tummies; love fills the air as the chubby cherub Cupid flies through it with a drawn bow in his hand. In 500 B.C., mythical Cupid (whose Latin name Cupido means "Desire") was a strong, slender youth equipped with the long, piercing arrows of attraction, erotic love, and sexual desire.

Rev. Perry M. Gauthier, V. D. M.

(This study is adapted from an earlier series by Rev. Gauthier, 1960–2020.)



INTRODUCTION

In 1200 B.C., a strong, muscle-bound man named Samson was a warrior beset with “too much” sexual desire. His true yet tragic story is one of a politico-military leader, extraordinarily gifted by God. As a “Judge,” he led, judged, and militarily delivered Israel from enemy armies. In a time of anarchy, Samson did great good as a civil leader, but his lusts proved stronger than his muscles. At Delilah’s delicate hands, his power was snipped to the floor. His fall is famous. Pastor Chuck Swindoll said Samson “was thrown into a dungeon with the excrement of oxen... a blind bald Jewish clown in a Philistine prison!” This political leader was soon to die a famous death with one final feat of strength. His tragic death was ultimately due to a deadly weakness—a deadly sin—his besetting sin of lust.

1. FIGHTING LUST PERSONALLY: FIVE GUIDELINES

Samson is not alone. The sin of lust tempts all those in political positions. It always has; it always will. Let us consider, then, five ways to fight lust *personally*.

A. The Runaway: Flee!

The Bible shows three enemies of the Christian—the world, the flesh, and the devil. It also prescribes three different ways to fight each. To fight the world, we are to “not be conformed... but transformed by the renewing of our minds.”² Of our fight against the devil, James says we are to “resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”³ Concerning the sexual sins of the flesh, our fighting strategy is not to think more clearly, nor to stand and fight by quoting relevant Scriptures, as if swinging a sword. No, the strategy is to flee! Mentor Paul coaches his protégé Timothy:

2 Timothy 2:22

Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness...with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.⁴

Sexual lusts rage first in the years of youth when hormones are high and wisdom is lacking. However, lust is not limited to the very young. Sixty-year-old Paul wrote this to Timothy who was probably almost thirty. However, personal stories about “dirty old men” abound. God commands us to master lust in our youth, lest it master us, even until death, as it did with strongman Samson. It is never too late to do the right thing—so flee (youthful) lusts. Fight by your flight. Regardless of your intellect, do not try to reason your way out of a lustful situation. Flee. *Run!*

B. The Setup: You Walked into That One

Evil often hunts for us like an aggressive young archer, anxious to sink his poison darts deep into our chests. At other times, we set ourselves up for failure. The Holy Spirit leads born-again believers. The Holy Scripture is a “light unto our path.” A sanctified conscience can also “be our



guide.” With these three advantages, the believer is able to heed Paul’s advice:

Romans 13:13-14

Let us behave properly as in the day... not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality... ¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

Sexual lusts gone wild tempt all political leaders—U.S. presidents, Israelite judges, and Nebraska senators. Make no provision for sexual sin. Do not set yourself up for failure. The devil wants to see you fall like Samson. Make no plans to indulge in the sin of lust that wants “too much” sex.

C. The Hookup: Friends with Benefits?

For the single senator, this Scripture passage summarizes several important sexual principles:

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

For this is the will of God, your sanctification... that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, ⁵not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶...the Lord is the avenger in all these things... ⁷For God has not called us for impurity, but in sanctification. ⁸So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.

Though it’s a cultural trend (and a movie title), “Friends with Benefits” will not benefit the single senator in the end. Whether single or married, Scripture says:

THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD: ABSTAIN FROM IMMORALITY.

D. The Vows: Before God and Witnesses

In a TV drama, I witnessed a rich bachelor (with Kennedy hair, jutting jaw, and chiseled chin) struggling with his commitment phobia. His decade-long pattern of non-stop libidinous assault on a series of trophy girlfriends made him a serial heartbreaker. It also made him terrified of marriage. In tuxedo and bow tie, he rationalized this excuse to skip out on his vows and become a runaway groom: “Can you see me in a monkey suit saying ‘I do’ before God and everybody else?” If you are married, remember your vows. They entitle you to one of the many benefits of marriage, exclusively private, lovingly intimate sexual pleasure.

1 Corinthians 7:2-3

Because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband. ³The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

E. The Mindset: Right Between the Ears

You may recall President James Earl Carter speaking of the need to be “right between the ears,” resisting the lusty temptations to put adultery





into mental motion. Also, former president of Western Seminary Earl Radmacher schooled us on this mental principle:

RIGHT LIVING BEGINS WITH RIGHT THINKING, AND RIGHT THINKING BEGINS WITH THINKING RIGHTLY ABOUT GOD.

2. FIGHTING LUST PROFESSIONALLY: THREE PROFESSIONAL QUESTIONS

In his detailed book *The Seven Deadly Sins: Lust*, Cambridge professor Simon Blackburn wrote:

Neurologists are plotting it, pharmacists are designing drugs to modify it, doctors are tinkering with its malfunctions, social psychologists are setting questionnaires about it, evolutionary psychologists are dreaming up theories of its origins, postmodernists are deconstructing it, and feminists are worrying about it. And a large part of the world's literature is devoted to it, or to its close relative, erotic love.⁵

What about professional lawmakers? What are they doing about this *crazy little thing* called lust?

A. Legislate Morality – Really?

George Washington's thoughts reveal a mindset foundational to America. The father of our country's mind had rightly fused church *into* the state. He said:

“OF ALL THE DISPOSITIONS AND HABITS WHICH LEAD TO POLITICAL PROSPERITY, RELIGION AND MORALITY ARE INDISPENSABLE SUPPORTS... THE MERE POLITICIAN... OUGHT TO RESPECT AND TO CHERISH THEM.”⁶

Many U.S. Presidents have realized that the separation of church and state was originally meant (*only*) to keep (*only*) the federal government from establishing a national church. Even the 44th President said:

“OUR LAW IS BY DEFINITION A CODIFICATION OF MORALITY, MUCH OF IT *GROUND*ED IN THE JUDEO-CHRISTIAN TRADITION.”⁷

I honor and respect all whom God ordains to hold political office. However, as I told a very patriotic friend in conversation recently, I care more about what the Bible says than what the founding fathers said or what any current political leaders say. Regarding moral evil in culture and societal crime, the Bible says government is to legislate against evil.

Romans 13:4

For [civil government] is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

However, morality has two sides: good and evil. Note:



1 Peter 2:14

[The king and] governors [in the institution of the state are] sent by [the Lord] for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.

These few facts are logically sound, historically accurate, time-tested, presidentially verified, and Biblically clear. They support the idea of government legislating morality (good and evil) using legal force.

B. Okay Then, Whose Morality?

I speak with my God-given (and First Amendment) right to freedom of religion and the free exercise thereof. My view is unapologetically a Christian worldview. Religions produce morals. Morals infuse laws.

Hindu morality infuses the body politic of Hindu lands so that it is illegal to eat certain meat—*Holy Cow!*

Jainist morality generates civil customs stronger than laws. An ancient branch of Hinduism, Jainism’s morality causes people to wear veils over their mouths and nostrils lest they breathe in and kill an ancestor reincarnated as a gnat. Although they reject the notion of a Supreme Being, their religious ethics dictate that such disrespectful killing is truly immoral.

Islamic morality, based on the *Quran*, fuses into the theocratic Islamic Constitution: (the dreaded) Sharia Law, or Sharia Constitution. Sharia Law allows and demands things like multiple marriages (for men only, as many as four wives for one man), honor killing of family members who leave Islam, obligatory Jihad (holy war) on three different levels, which includes commands to “kill the infidels” (Christians and Jews), and taqiyya (allowed and/or obligatory lying). The stronger Islam grows in a country, the more dominant Sharia Constitutional rule becomes.

To see the obvious effects of Islamic governments legislating morality, look at countries where it has grown stronger over time: Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Jordan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and in recent years, France and Egypt. It is a matter of time before Islamic morality (as with every other morality) is codified into law where that religion is dominant.

Christian morality is the morality on which the United States was founded. Revisionist historians would have us believe that our nation was mostly founded by deists and atheists, with a smattering of Christians in their midst. The opposite is true. The United States Constitution is based on **Christian law**.⁸

C. But How Involved Is Civil Government?

Liberals and conservatives have differing views of levels of government involvement. The debate rages between those who liberally give oversight of many aspects of culture to the government and those who want to conserve those powers for the people.

In legislating the morality of sexuality and in legislation about lust, it is not the job of government to be “the thought police.” All sin (and all





crime) starts in the mind. However, it is impossible for civil government to control the thoughts of citizens (or their consciences). It is also not possible to punish every immoral sexual act. Partially related to the impracticality of enforcement, in 1978 Nebraska repealed its sodomy laws.⁹

Perhaps the focus should be on two areas. First, legislating against sexual acts that are clearly criminal (e.g., rape and child pornography). Secondly, government should put legislative priority on the most foundational sexual mores and issues. Thirdly:

GOVERNMENTS SHOULD NOT LEGISLATE IN ANY WAY THAT NORMALIZES IMMORALITY OR MAKES SEXUAL SINS MORALLY FAVORABLE.

For example, marriage and marital faithfulness, as prioritized in the Ten Commandments, is a major issue for culture. I believe that it was legislatively *immoral* for Nebraska to enact no fault divorce law in 1972.¹⁰ I personally, and hundreds of thousands of Nebraskans, have suffered great loss as a result.

Conversely, it is my own personal opinion—to which I have every right—that Nebraska citizens “legislated morality” morally with the Defense of Marriage Constitutional Amendment (Nebraska Constitution, Article I-29 (2000), Initiative Measure No. 416).¹¹

Of course, you have every right to disagree. If you do, my first question is, “From what moral basis do you legislate?” You also have freedom of religion and speech. However, I also respectfully ask you, “From what religious base do you speak?”

THE WISDOM OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION, SPEECH, AND EXPRESSION DOES NOT MEAN ALL IDEAS HAVE EQUAL WORTH. IT HONORS HUMAN DIGNITY AND INVITES OPEN COMMUNICATION OF IDEAS, VALUES, AND MORALITY.

A CLOSING CONSIDERATION

The nature of our weekly studies only allows us to begin conversations and to study materials in limited depth. Below is a list of how **Christian morals**, as they have been infused into culture, changed immoral institutions through the ages. Note that many of the changes affected the first two areas of deadly sin: Greed and Lust.

- Infanticide
- Child marriage
- Temple prostitution
- Forced prostitution
- Child prostitution
- Women as second-class citizens
- The superstitious killing of twins at birth
- Abandonment of the elderly in the wild
- Revenge killing
- Honor killings



- The abuse of children
- The purchase of wives
- The sale of children to pay off family debts
- The abuse of prisoners
- Child labor
- The killing of special-needs or deformed children
- Gladiatorial combat
- Death games
- Bribery
- Cruel and unusual punishments
- Slavery
- Animal Cruelty
- Racism
- Immolation (the burning alive) of widows
- Multiple wives

I feel a great sense of honor and privilege to be a part of Christendom when I see a list like this. Christian people exercised their unalienable rights to let the morals of their religion inform, infuse, and improve society and especially its legislative bodies.

Legislate morality? Of course, we should. And thank God that He has ordained it should be so! What is your morality, Honorable Senator? Please know that it makes all the difference in the legislative world.

May the Lord Himself richly bless you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Perry M. Gauthier', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rev. Perry M. Gauthier

FOOTNOTES

1. In A.D. 496, Pope Gelasius I declared February 14 St. Valentine's Day in an effort to Christianize the pagan festival of Lupercalia. Some say Saint Valentine himself, who died in A.D. 270, died or was buried on February 14.

2. Romans 12:1 – “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”

3. James 4:7 – “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

4. All Scripture quotations are from the *New American Standard Bible 1995 Update* unless otherwise noted.

5. Simon Blackburn, *The Seven Deadly Sins: Lust*, The New York Public Library: Oxford University Press, 2004, page 11.

6. George Washington's “Farewell Address,” https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp.

7. Barack Obama, “Call to Renewal Keynote Address,” Washington, D.C., June 28, 2006, <https://sojo.net/articles/transcript-obamas-2006-sojournerscall-renewal-address-faith-and-politics/>.





8. Dr. Phillip G. Kayser, *In God We Trust: A Constitutional Defense of the National Motto*, Biblical Blueprints, 2009, pages 3-4. Used by Permission. All Rights Reserved:

“Another Constitutional evidence that the Supreme Court of the United States cited was the issue of common law. To me, this is probably the most weighty evidence. Unfortunately, common law is no longer being taught in our law schools or used in our courts, but the Constitution assumed that our courts would always use common law. In fact, Constitutional expert James McClellan says that the ‘language of both the Federal and State constitutions in the United States cannot fully be understood without reference to the English common law’ (James McClellan, *Liberty, Order, and Justice: An Introduction to the Constitutional Principles of American Government*, p. 33. On page 35, McClellan says, ‘Some provisions of the Constitution, such as the one referring to “contract” in Article 1, Section 10, presume the existence of common law and cannot be understood properly without reference to it’).

“Amendment VII to our Constitution says, ‘Where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise re-examined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of common law.’ Even citizens of the Northwest Territories were guaranteed that they ‘shall always be entitled to... judicial proceedings according to the course of the common law’ (Northwest Ordinance, Article 2). It was mandated for all time.

“And what is common law? The Supreme Court case I just cited said, ‘...Christianity, general Christianity, is and always has been, a part of the common law... not Christianity with an established church... but Christianity with liberty of conscience to all men’ (William J. Federer, *America’s God and Country*, Coppel, TX: Fame Publishing, 1994, p. 600).

“Chief Justice Story said, ‘There never has been a period of history in which the Common Law did not recognize Christianity as lying at its foundation’ (Federer, *America’s God and Country*, p. 574).

“This is why on September 17, 1796 (seven years after he signed the Constitution), President George Washington said, ‘It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible’ (James K. Paulding, *A Life of Washington*, 1836, Vol. II, p. 208; see also Federer, *America’s God and Country*, p. 660).

“Making Common Law the law governing all the state and federal courts makes God’s law the law of the land. No wonder the law schools have ditched common law. If they did teach common law, people would begin to realize how Christian our nation really was. Charles Finney was converted to Christ by studying commentaries on common law when he was preparing to be a lawyer.

“President Andrew Jackson is representative of many presidents when he said about the Bible, ‘That book, sir, is the Rock upon which our republic rests.’ Common law mandates that the Bible be the foundation. Blackstone’s commentary on the common law said, ‘[God’s law] is binding over all the globe in all countries, and at all times; no human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this: and such of them as are valid derive all their force, and all their authority, mediately or immediately, from this original’ (William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co., 1879, Vol. 1, p. 39).

“Common law is Christian law.”

9. See this link for the history of this law in Nebraska: <http://www.glapn.org/sodomylaws/sensibilities/nebraska.htm>.

10. “Family Relations,” Vol. 51, No. 4, Families and the Law (Oct. 2002).

11. Unfortunately, this Nebraska Constitutional provision was rendered inoperative by the Supreme Court of the United States in the 2015 case *Obergefell v. Hodges*, <https://nebraskalegisature.gov/laws/articles.php?article=I-29>.

Personal Study Notes

Verse of the Week

1 Thess. 4:3-5

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WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

Meets during the 107th Legislature's First Session

SENATORS

6:45–8:00 A.M. Wednesdays
Room 1022, Facilitated by
Sen. Clements & Sen. Arch

STAFF

12:00 P.M. Wednesdays
Room 1022, Facilitated by
Joel Hunt



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4547 Calvert Street • Lincoln, NE 68506