



Wanton Woman

Defeating Lust by Desiring Love

June 14, 2026

Today, we're stepping into Joseph's reality to learn how to destroy selfish lust with sexual holiness!



Which is *why* this sermon is rated SM, for *spiritually mature*. Cuz it contains *sexually explicit Scripture*, and *graphic language*, and *partial nudity*. Typical for the Bible; oddly *unusual* for those trying to understand it. So: **Are you feeding lust or defeating lust?** Because, **we feed it and strengthen it with self-indulgence**, and **we weaken it and defeat it with selfless love**. I loved Noah's *resistance-training analogy* last Sunday. **We develop physical AND spiritual strength by opposing opposing-forces**. But the key is to *know* yourself so well that you can **stop one rep short of failure**. Which is *why* we're told to:

Resist the devil and he will flee from you. – James 4:7 NIV

[But also to] Flee from idolatry. – 1 Corinthians 10:14 NIV

[And to] Flee from sexual immorality. – 1 Corinthians 6:18 NIV

[And to] Flee also youthful [i.e. immature] lusts – 2 Timothy 2:22 NKJ

You see, **lust shows up in fleeting feelings that quickly flee** if we just hold 'em off for a bit, or *distract ourselves*, or *escape* to a different location. As Kenny Rogers kinda said: **You gotta know when to hold the devil at bay, when to fold your hands to pray, and when to run away**. Because, **the real battle comes when we don't want to hold 'em, fold 'em, or flee**. Which brings us to Mrs. Honey-Pot'iphar's seduction of Joseph ... who runs away *one rep* too late.

The Bible says he's *super-handsome*, not *superhuman*. And if we *fail* to see how *forcefully* he's tempted, we'll *fail* to be *inspired* by his *first* and *foremost* love for the Lord. Daniel spent a night in a lion's den; but little Joe's living in a cougar's cage. And we talked about our **one master desire that every other desire – good, bad, right, wrong, holy, unholy – will always fall in line behind**. The one **dominating desire** of our truly **supreme love**. Which is why David says:

I desire to do Your will, [first and foremost] O my God – Psalm 40:8 NIV

And [Asaph says] earth has nothing I [supremely] desire besides You. – Psalm 73:25 NIV

Even though **lust fights for the front of the line** (right Bathsheba?), *love begins and ends with God*.

If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. [Because] God is [the definition of] love. [So] Whoever lives in love [obviously] lives [first and foremost] in God, and God in them. [And] This is how love is made complete among us [humans] – 1 John 4:15-17 NIV



So many relationships fail because at least **one fallible human sees the other fallible human as their supreme love** – thus expecting a fallible human to then meet their deepest spiritual need for love. In the Marvin Gaye song, “Sexual Healing” the singer pleads for sex while repeating the line, “Heal me my darling.” Yikes. Goss. Lower your expectations! **Before you love others ...**

[Jesus said] “You shall love the Lord your God with *all* your heart, with *all* your soul, with *all* your mind, and with *all* your strength. [Because] This is the first [and foremost] commandment.” – Mark 12:30 NKJ

“Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first [and foremost] love. ... [So] Repent and do the things you did at first.” – Revelation 2:4-5 NIV

[That is] Do not love the world [of sinful man] or the things in the world [of man]. If anyone loves the world [of man], the love of [God] the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world [of man]—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of [God] the Father but is of the world [of sinful man]. – 1 John 2:15-16 NKJ

In every city, there are two cities, a spiritual city of God and a material city of man. And the thing that marks the citizens is their supreme motive: **love of God or love of self**. And the difference shows up in how they use whatever power, advantages, or appeal they have. Whether it’s to **satisfy their cravings at the expense of others**, or to **glorify their Lord by loving and blessing others**. One of the most comprehensive studies ever undertaken on American sexual behavior found that married evangelical couples have the most satisfying sex lives.¹ Yay us! Good job! Want to know why? Because, **Godly relationships and great sex are both built on trust and commitment**. And in the city of God, **love and devotion is the goal, and sex is merely an expression**. Whereas, in the city of man, **sex is an appetite and satisfying a craving without a commitment is the goal**. And the end result is a soul-wrenching search for true intimacy where it’ll never be found. Which is why the sex is so much better in the City of God!

But the Mrs. fantasizes about an adulterous affair between a younger man and a bolder woman. And she acts on her impulse with shameless aggression.

Now Joseph was beautiful in form [physique] AND beautiful in appearance. And ... [Potiphar’s] wife set her eyes on Joseph and said, “Lie with me.” But he refused and said to his master’s wife ... [among other things] “[How] could I do this great evil [against you, your husband, and your household] and sin against God?” So it happened that as she spoke to Joseph day after day, [to wear down his resistance and/or find a way around it] he did not listen to her [request] to [just] lie beside her or [even to just] be with her. [Because she’s a wanton woman and he’s a’wantin’ a woman!] Now it happened one day that [he ended up with her and beside her, when] he went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the household was there inside. [“Hello? Where’d everybody go?” This is where the angels shout, “Get out of the house! Run!” “Hey’ey. Looks like it’s just you and me. What are the odds?”] Then she seized him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me!” – Genesis 39:6-12 LSB

¹ The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States, 1994, University of Chicago Press

This doesn't mean she physically restrained him. Some translations say **"she caught him."** She got what she wanted: his garment off his body and into her hot little hands. But **little Joe suddenly comes to his spiritual senses in a last-second moment of first-love clarity!** And he sees that he, like we, has two choices in this battle with lust: **win or sin.** So he sprints and repents!

And he left [abandoned] his garment in her hand and fled [from her, the situation, and the lust that had fought to the front of the line] and went outside. – Genesis 39:12 LSB

But **why did he run?** Day after day, he's walked away from her seductions. And she uses the same ol' line. So what's so different? Well, the fact that this time **he let it get to the point where his garment is in her hand!** And Joseph's "garment" now becomes the focus of the story.



His garment is mentioned six times in the next seven verses. His garment throws the Mrs. into a murderous rage, is the key piece of evidence in an accused rape, and lands ol' Joe in the slammer. So it's kinda crucial that we know what the original audience did – what Joe was wearing. And **only one article of clothing makes everything make sense**, and it happens to be what every male in Joseph's day wore. I hate when tradition interferes with translation. The word (beged) simply means clothing or covering or wrap. In Scripture it describes everything from underwear to turbans. (Ex 28:4, 42; Lev 6:10-11) But the NIV and NLT specify it as a cloak. Mostly because in the 1600s (long before modern archaeology) they painted historical scenes in then modern clothing. So pilgrims are falsely portrayed with big buckled hats and shoes, and Joseph is a feather-capped, foppish-dandy! Not what we see on paintings and statues from his day. In fact, **Egyptians had a very specific, old-kingdom style: short skirts and tall rabbits with huge ears! men, from kings to slaves wore short, linen wrap-arounds that tied in front. Kinda like a locker-room towel.** And it wasn't until the Middle Kingdom that men's underwear was introduced. Call me crazy, but I like my Bible to make sense. Especially when the Mrs. panics and puts her own life in peril, all because of the garment Joseph left in her hand. So why all the fuss? I mean, who cares if he went outside without a cloak? She could've just said, "I don't know why he wears a cloak; this is Egypt in 2200^{BC}!" Now, Wycliffe says, **"She took the hem of his cloth,"** and Douay-Rheims calls it **"the skirt"**. So before we go on, let's go back and fix that painting! Cuz I want to stick an image in your head. So let's dress Joseph properly, get rid of that cloak, and see how he actually ... fled outside!

The Mrs. obviously got him out of his commando-style kilt (called a short shendyt), something the Church wasn't very interested in painting in the 1600s. But, now we can see why that "went outside" is very significant and very separate from "and fled". Cuz **when she took his wrap in her hands, she put her reputation, marriage, and possibly life, in his.** So who's gonna take the rap? Cuz **when he went outside without his garment, he exposed her.** And since she's made him her master desire, his reaction is the ultimate rejection. Because he makes her adulterous seduction and failure and humiliation very public. And **if there's one thing lust hates most, it's the light!** And she feels betrayed and humiliated and devastated and dishonored.

Now it happened, when she saw [realized] that he had [done the *unthinkable* and] left his garment in her hand and had fled outside, that [the magnitude hit, and the panic that partners with lust set in, cuz this winch knows her wretched deed's been exposed! Then she got an idea, an awful idea; the winch got a wonderfully awful idea! "I know what I'll do." The winch sneered as she spoke. "I'll lie by his kilt that you kooks call a cloak!" Then] she called [screamed (39:14)] to the men of her household – Genesis 39:13-14 NIV



Our Creator wired us with a heightened awareness of all things sexual, and a heightened desire for all things spiritual. Because, **sexuality and spirituality go hand in hand – it's lust and love that wage war within.** And **the enemy works overtime to convince the world that God is a prude.** But remember, **sex predates sin.** The first story in the Bible tells how God made a man and a woman, naked and unashamed, and commanded them to have sex! I picture God saying, "Be fruitful and multiply." And they're like, "How?" And He's like, "The two become one flesh." And they're like, "How?" And He's like, "This n' that." And they're like, "That's weird, but okay." And He's like, "Wait up! Not right this second. For this reason a man leaves his Father to be joined to his wife." And they're unfazed, "Oh, okay." Cuz they don't know it's "nasty" yet.

Cuz it wasn't. It was innocent. And God doesn't want His marrieds to settle for less than Creator-honoring intoxicating love-making! As He makes clear in the blessing of the ... male anatomy.

Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated [or drunk CEB, or ravished KJV, or transported AMP, or captivated NLT] always in her love. – Proverbs 5:18-19 ESV

The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's. [Opens with her saying] "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your love is better than wine" – Song 1:1-2 ESV

In the city of man, sex is nothing more than an appetite that needs to be fed when hungry. The problem is, you're feeding lust. And, **the more you feed lust, the hungrier it gets, and the emptier you feel.** Because, **lust looks for someone to take temporary pleasure from.** Whereas, **love looks for someone to give permanent pleasure to.** And this goes way beyond sex. But at its core, **love desires the person, heart, soul, and body. Lust desires the pleasure.** Heart and soul get in the way, cuz the body is negotiable. It's merely the required delivery system. And my heart goes out to those in the city of man who just live together ... in an on-going audition.

You see, **lust may be aimed at other things but it's always focused on itself.** BUT, if you've been caught with your kilt down, **there's no reason to wallow in guilt.** Just right your wrongs, receive your loving God's forgiveness, your gracious Creator's correction, and find your love. Cuz, **it's not about breaking religious rules, it's about finding what you're actually searching for.**

And remember, sexual holiness is not anti-sex; it's **great sex governed by love and joy and glory and honor rather than lust and appetite and shame and dishonor.** Paul quotes the "two shall become one flesh" Scripture to describe Christ and the church! (Eph 5:31-32) That's weird, but okay. Because, **marital sex, at its intoxicating best, is still a mere foreshadow of the joy and satisfaction that awaits in God's Kingdom!** And this is where we'll put God's story to bed for today.