



Dealing with Sensual Pleasures

We all have to deal with sensual pleasures, some good and some not-so-good. Every one of you have thought about the “why” and the “how to deal with” aspects of the not-so-good ones. Why do people get so drawn in unto them, and how do they deal with them? These are honest questions. God’s Word speaks loudly to both of these questions, providing answers of deliverance for those who want to hear.

To start this study, we will begin with a Greek word, it’s meaning, and accompanying verses. Understanding this word will help you immeasurably in dealing with your own not-so-good or unWordly sensual pleasures.



Hedone is our Greek word meaning, “sensual pleasures.” Its root is handano, meaning, “to please.”

And that [seeds] which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures [hedone, sensual pleasures] of this life [bios, meaning, “existence”], and bring no fruit [forty – a significant age of maturity] to perfection. (Luke 8:14)

One characteristic of these people is that they “heard.” They heard God’s Word, and they also heard the words of sensual pleasure. Have you ever wished that you didn’t have two ears and two eyes? *These four instruments of vivid reception make doubly certain you receive what it is you are focusing on.* This is great as long as you are focusing on the right things.

Now, you have to ask yourself, “what or who is causing the choking?” Many are so quick to blame the devil. While ultimately, the blame goes to him, I’d like you to carefully read this verse again, specifically this part:

“When they have heard, go

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forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures...”

It states that the people, when they go forth, are choked WITH CARES AND RICHES AND PLEASURES. That’s pretty clear in my book. This teaching focuses on the “pleasures” aspect.

You may be wondering what prompted me into this study? For years, I wondered what it was that lured people into different “sensual” situations, over and over again. Honestly, I couldn’t figure it out, at least from God’s Word perspective. Then one day, it hit me like a ton of bricks. I realized that the reason people are attracted to such practices in the first place is because they derive pleasure from them. Duh!! But what really astounded me is that this is exactly what the Word of God teaches.

According to Luke 8:14, *if you are “choked” with*

“pleasures,” you aren’t living LIFE anyway. You merely exist. And, isn’t this the view you usually have when you try to help one of these poor souls who seem so intent on obtaining their pleasures, placing their longings well above most anything else? When this person reaches 40, he should be producing lots of well-earned fruit. (The word “fruit” actually means this.) But he isn’t. Instead, he is caught up with the cares and riches and sensual pleasures of his existence.

Now, I’d like to enlighten you on the word “choke.” *I’ll bet you are imagining someone grabbing another’s throat, and giving them a good wringing.* If you are, you are not being vivid enough with the Greek word sumpingō. This word means, “to strangle completely.” Wow, that’s dramatic! A complete strangling, in anyone’s book,

eventually leads to death. In other words, individuals wrapped up in sensual pleasures occupy the road down, and end up either dead, or at least, nearly dead.

What really gets choked? Matthew tells us exactly what gets choked.

He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. (Matthew 13:22)

The Word gets choked. When the Word gets choked out of someone, they can’t don’t produce godly fruit. You’ve got to have good seed in you before anything can grow, and it has to be in you long enough to really see results. Now we know that we are talking about believers who have “sensual pleasure” problems. The person had some of God’s Word, but the pleasures

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reached up and choked the Word right out of him. This speaks rather loudly to the POWER of pleasure.

Sensual pleasure is POWERFUL. Never underestimate its power. If you are caught up in a cycle of pleasure, thinking that nothing bad can come of it, think again. Sensual pleasure, not in harmony with God's Word, can wreak tremendous havoc. It can suck you directly away from God's Word. It is not something to reckon with. ***Your best "bet" is to leave it alone -- completely alone!***

Sensual pleasures are pleasures associated with the senses. That was easy to define. If you want to get more specific, you will have to fill in the blank yourself. But to help you do this, read the next verse.

For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient,

deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures [hedone, sensual delight], living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. (Titus 3:3)

The word "lusts" means, "longings or desires." Either longings or desires AND sensual delights DEMAND service. They demand that you come back, time and time again, and participate in them. ***If you have something that seems to continually rob God's Word from your mind and heart, and continually seems to demand your participation even though you know it to be wrong, it's probably sensual pleasure.*** People

who serve such pleasures have several things in common. They are foolish. They are disobedient to God's Word. They are deceived. They live in malice (evil). They

are envious. They are hateful and they hate one another. Talk about a counselor's guidebook. These characteristics document a "sensual pleasure" person almost completely. If you are one of these people, or if you have to deal with one of them, you can be guaranteed that some or all of these characteristics are present. Find out which ones are present and see if you can help the person.

A person caught up in sensual pleasures had to make a decision to be that way. That's right! ***He made a choice one-day.*** According to Hebrews, he decided to "enjoy" those things.

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures [hedone, sensual delight] of sin for a season;

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Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. (Hebrews 11:24-26)

Moses knew about the power of sensual pleasures. He knew about how much he could enjoy sensual pleasures AND the ever-present need to refuse them. Moses chose to experience affliction with the people of God rather than to sin. Ungodly, sensual pleasure is sinful in God's eyes. ***“Sinful” means, “it takes us away from God’s Word.”*** He doesn't want us partaking in it, giving us greater reason to shun it at all costs. Moses chose to be maltreated rather than to have pleasure. What a life! Almost everyone I know would rather have pleasure than maltreatment. What about you? Moses was quite a man in God's eyes. Moses kept his eyes on the first coming of the Messiah.

That's what kept him from the sensual pleasures offered to him in Egypt. ***Keeping your eyes on Christ and his second coming is what will keep you from the sensual pleasures offered you today.***

I told you that sensual pleasures have power. Now, I'm going to tell you that sensual pleasures have the potential to cause war and fightings among and in you.

From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts [hedone, sensual delight] that war in your members. Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts [hedone, sensual delight]. Ye

adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. (James 4:1-4)

If you find that you are serving sensual pleasures, you definitely don't have your eyes on eternity. You are focused on the world and the things of this day and time.

When and where you have warring members (Christians fighting one another), you WILL have “sensual pleasure” problems.

This stands to reason since sensual pleasures choke God's Word right out of you. Sensual Pleasure Christians are not spiritually minded at all. They walk by the five senses, not by the spirit.

Sensual pleasures, with their demanding service requirements, cause a person to “consume”

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things upon his sensual pleasures. “Consume” means, “waste.” When he gets something he has longed for, he ends up wasting it upon his sensual pleasure.

We’ve seen many things about sensual pleasures. We know that a person is attracted to them via his eyes and ears. We know that these pleasures choke God’s Word right out of a person. ***Sensual pleasures are pleasures that do not line up with God’s Word. In fact, they run at cross-purposes to God’s Word.*** People driven by such pleasures aren’t living at all; they only exist. If not cared for, these people can end up dead. We learned of several fitting characteristics of these people including foolishness, disobedience, deceit, malice, envy and hate. If one is ever going to get caught up in sensual pleasures, he must make a decision to “enjoy” them. To shun them, he must

decide to associate with people of the same determination – like Moses did. We also learned that sensual people are caught up in warring and fighting among each other.

How can a believer avoid such a deep pitfall? How can he get out if he has fallen in? He must turn to God for help, and he must make some decisions based on what I have just taught.

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation

against them before the Lord. But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure [hedone, sensual delight] to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: (2 Peter 2:9-14)

God will deliver you out of temptations, but you have to want to be delivered. 2 Peter goes on to tell us that some mighty powerful people walk around seducing those with unstable souls. ***You have to pay attention***

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to those around you, making sure you don't allow them into your life! You also have to strengthen your soul [life] with God's Word so that you aren't unstable in the first place. As you can imagine, this takes time and commitment. You must be willing to **commit your time** to learning God's Word, and you must be willing to **commit your will** to practicing what you have learned.

All too often, I hear single people say that they have trouble with sexual encounters, and other sensual desires. I learn of married people testing the currents of sensual passions, doing things that break up a marriage. All of these people actively wonder why this is happening to them and what they can do about it. ***It is happening to them because they are surrounded by it and they allow themselves***

to be attracted to it. They can walk away from it with God's help, if only they would. But many don't. After complaining of the troubles encountered, the very next day, they are right back at it.

Somewhere along the line, you have to **draw a line** and NEVER CROSS IT AGAIN. If that's too hard for you, you must **turn to God** for His support, but you also **MUST DO YOUR PART**. If there is failure in any attempt to shun unWordly sensual pleasure, the failure generally is due to a lack of action on the part of the participant.

Sensual desires and pleasures are here to stay. There is always a proper time and place for all of God's, godly-designed pleasures. Sexual pleasures are reserved for marriage according to God's Word. ***Sensual pleasures that choke God's Word right out of your life***

aren't reserved for anytime. Don't do them. By applying these principles, you should be well on your way to knowledge of and deliverance from unWordly sensual pleasures!

- Turn your eyes and ears to God and his Word.
- Place your longings for God's Word well above all others.
- If you feel as if God's Word is being choked out of you, shun that activity.
- Only God, His Word and God's people deserve SERVICE.
- Make the right choice.
- Be eternity minded.
- Don't strive with others; Strive to be spiritually minded.
- In temptations, turn to God AND DO YOUR PART TOO!
- Pay attention to those around you and shun ungodly situations.
- Strengthen your soul [life].
- Commit your TIME AND WILL to God and His Word.
- Draw a line and never cross

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