

*New Life Ministries and  
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## **Every Young Man's Battle 4-Week Bible Study**

***Week One:*** *We Dared to Learn the Truth*

***Week Two:*** *We Dared to Challenge Our Eyes*

***Week Three:*** *We Dared to Change Our Standards*

***Week Four:*** *We Dared to Fight Back*

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# Every Young Man's Battle

## 4-Week Bible Study

It's harder today for guys in their teens to stay sexually pure than it was a generation ago. Too many women, starting in junior high, don't know what it means to dress modestly or why. So they don't. And being visually stimulated, young men are bombarded with skin and cleavage daily. You can see more sexually provocative material on television and in the movies that adults don't need to see, let alone boys who are learning to be men whose hormones are beginning to run wild. Therefore the book *Every Young Man's Battle* was written, and is the basis for this study.

This study is for a young man in his teenage years. And even better than studying this by himself, would be for a father or significant male in a young man's life to study this material with him. There are six daily readings for each of four weeks. If it works out for a father and son to sit down and go through each reading each day together, that would be ideal. If daily isn't possible, meet once a week and review the readings you and your son do each day in between your meetings, and go through the answers to the six daily questions together at your weekly meeting.

Share your cell phone numbers and call one another when those temptations come along and you need someone to call who might give you a quick word of encouragement and a reminder that you can win this battle! Let us know how it goes. For more information, check out [WeDared.com](http://WeDared.com). And if we can help you along the way or when your study is over, call us at (800) NEW-LIFE (639-5433).

# Week One: *We Dared* to Learn the Truth

## **1. Attraction to Girls Is Natural.**

The desire to look at the female body is a God-given attraction. It's natural as you grow older to want to hang around girls, and it's natural for you to find a girl's beauty tugging at your eyes for attention. The temptation, however, is to fulfill these desires and attractions in a wrong way and to go beyond what God designed to be natural and normal. God wants us to see girls as precious, children of God. Our culture tells us that girls and young women are an extremely interesting collection of body parts that were made for our viewing pleasure. It's important for you to recognize the difference and view things God's way. You know when you're thinking about her mostly as a pair of breasts walking by, or a beautiful pair of legs and little else. You'll be tempted to respond inappropriately with your natural desire and attraction to girls. Obviously, stripping off her clothes in the basement at the after-game party is a wrong way, but it's just as wrong to stare lustfully at her and fantasize in your mind. Neither practice is where God wants our minds and behavior to go.

*How do guys minimize looking lustfully at women?*

## **2. Sex Is Exhilarating.**

There's nothing in the world like experiencing an orgasm. But God intended for this to happen within the confines of marriage. If you experience orgasm prematurely (before marriage) you'll be drawn to however you experienced it over and over. You'll be treading in dangerous waters and you don't want to go there. Backing up on a freeway is hard, and so is overcoming the desire to experience orgasm once experienced. God's plan of purity is for you to experience that when you are married.

*What are some of the dangers of pre-marital sex?*

## **3. Sex Is a Slippery Slope.**

If you don't drive a stake into the ground and declare, "*This is as far as I go, and I won't go any further,*" then you'll lose your footing on the slippery slope of sex. You'll be told and tempted to make sweeping rationalizations for your behavior outside of God's plan, like:

- "*It's okay because I really love her. I know I'm going to marry her anyway.*"
- "*Why wait until marriage? Everyone says it's okay.*"
- "*Sex isn't wrong for everyone. Religious people are just scared by what's natural.*"

The non-Christians in our world have sold this thinking to too many Christians. If you feel a bit uncomfortable with these thoughts, that's good. You should, because they are wrong and outside God's plan for you and sex. It's amazing how you can justify your actions to yourself and to God. These rationalizations allow your conscience to gradually become accustomed to what the world says in opposition to God's word.

*What is the stake in the ground you should drive related to sex?*

## **4. God Has Standards of Sexual Behavior for His Children.**

God takes sexual standards seriously, and He wants you to listen to Him on this matter. Since He's interested in your purity, maybe you need to get just as interested. Clearly, premarital intercourse is outside His standards. But what about oral sex? Mutual masturbation? Petting? French-kissing? Where are the boundaries? We'll get to the details later, but first I want to tell you that God has already driven His own stake into the ground: "*Among you there must not be even*

*a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place.” (Ephesians 5:3-4)*

That, my friend, is quite a stake. Not even a hint? Hmm. Do you and your friends, Christian or not, act in this manner? Unfortunately, Christian teens and young men are often indistinguishable from their non-Christian peers, sharing their tastes in popular music, dirty jokes, and attitudes about premarital sex. Kristin, a teenager, told us, *“Our youth group is filled with kids faking their Christian walk. They’re actually taking drugs, drinking, partying, and having sex. If you want to walk purely, it’s easier to hang around with the non-Christians at school than to hang around with the Christians at church. I say that because school friends know where I stand, and they say, ‘That’s cool—I can accept that.’ The Christian kids mock me. They laugh and ask, ‘Why be so straight? Get a life!’ They pressure my values at every turn.”*

I’m not pointing a finger at teenagers. Young adults in their late twenties are no different from Christian teens. Linda, a single career woman, says her adult singles group at church has *“players”*—men and women who send signals that they’re ready to play in the bedroom. Married couples have also fallen short. There isn’t a day in which I (Steve Arterburn) don’t take a call on my daily radio talk show from a husband or wife asking how he or she can recover from a partner’s adulterous affair or sexual addiction.

*What are God’s standards concerning your sexuality?*

### **5. God’s Love Is Not Based upon Your Ability to Meet His Standards.**

God’s love for you is unconditional; it never changes. Before you were formed in the womb, He loved you. You’re the apple of His eye. His love for you has no limits, and His love for you never wanes. If you masturbate, that fact doesn’t lessen your value to Him. If you get up under a girl’s bra, God doesn’t regret having sent His Son to die for you. This is true for all of us. If you continue to visit porn sites on the web, He still loves you. When you continue to ignore Him, He will continue to pursue you, aching to reach you before it’s too late and your heart is too hardened to sense His pursuit. Bottom line is, there’s nothing you can do to make God love you less (or more).

*How have you tried to earn God’s love?*

### **6. Rules Are Part of a Vibrant Relationship with Christ.**

I recall how the Holy Spirit whispered to me, *“This practice can’t be tolerated anymore in your life. You are Christ’s now, and He loves you.”* The implication was that continued obsession with sex and sexual activity would hurt my intimacy with Christ. When you break His standards, the Lord doesn’t reject you, but you can’t be as close to Him as you’d like, or as He’d like you to be.

I (Fred Stoeker) prayed to God one day in my office about my sexual obsession, and I sensed God telling me, *“No more!”* in regard to my sexual exploits. I felt as though I’d taken a punch in the gut. By the grace of God, I didn’t say, *“Hey, what’s the deal? You’re taking my freedom away! You’re killing me!”* Instead, I said, *“You got it, Father!”* A new life in me was moving me His way. I had a desire to be closer to Him. And in order to get closer to Him, I had to put up some boundaries with those women in my life.

When I got close to God, what He said about interpersonal relationships started to make sense. I quickly found that God’s rules weren’t just sets of arbitrary, kill-joy regulations. Instead, His rules set me free to live fully and to avoid dangerous traps. For instance, after I moved back to Iowa, I continued to maintain a phone relationship with one of my girlfriends back in California, the one I was most serious about. My friends and family fully expected us to marry someday since we’d been an item for three years. Then at church I heard the pastor say that Christians shouldn’t be unequally yoked with nonbelievers. Since I was a Christian, and she wasn’t, this news presented a problem. My reaction? You got it, Father.

I called her and explained the verse in the Bible about being unequally yoked. *“I really need you to explore this and to seek God,”* I said, *“or I don’t know how we can keep our relationship going.”* *“Okay, I’ll read my Bible for thirty days, and*

*we'll see," she promised. A month later, I heard from her, right on cue. "I've done what I promised," she said. "But I just can't buy this stuff at all." "I'm sorry to hear that," I responded. Then I quietly said that we should go separate ways. God's rule freed me to break off the relationship and allowed Him to find someone better suited to be my wife. Less than a year later, God introduced me to Brenda, and my life has never been the same.*

*What's the difference between trying to earn God's love, vs. sensing God's love, when you follow His rules concerning your sexuality?*

# Week Two: *We Dared* to Challenge Our Eyes

To challenge our eyes, we need to understand the four steps of how sin has affected the way we're naturally wired as men to be visually stimulated.

## **1. We Are Rebellious By Nature.**

When Paul explained to Timothy that, "*Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner*" (1 Timothy 2: 14), he was noting that Adam wasn't being tricked when he ate of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. Adam knew it was wrong, but he ate it anyway. In the millennia since then, all of Adam's sons tend to be just as rebellious.

Our maleness brings a natural, uniquely male form of rebelliousness. This natural tendency gives us the arrogance needed to stop short of God's standards. As men, we'll often choose sin simply because we like our own way.

While our natural rebelliousness provides the arrogance necessary to stop short of God's standards, our natural dislike of a life of purity gives us the desire to stop short and to instead seek the temporary pleasures of sin.

*How do you see men rebel sexually in our culture? How have you rebelled? How do you want to be different from the culture?*

## **2. We Have A Strong, Regular Sex Drive. (Part 1)**

In "*What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women*," Dr. Dobson writes, "*When sexual response is blocked, males experience an accumulating physiological pressure which demands release. Two seminal vesicles (small sacs containing semen) gradually fill to capacity; as maximum level is reached, hormonal influences sensitize the man to all sexual stimuli.*" For most men, this buildup to heightened sexual desire takes only about seventy-two hours.

This pressure men experience does not justify seeking release through pornography or masturbation. The body has built-in mechanisms of release (including nocturnal emissions and overflow into the urine), and in fact I've talked with many single men who, by consistently keeping their eyes and minds pure of sensual things, haven't had sex or masturbated for years. The pressure "*dries up*," they say. Still, it's important for all men to realize how the cycle of pressure can escalate our sensitivity to temptation. After having sex on Sunday night, you drive to work Monday morning and, without much reaction, notice a new billboard with a foxy babe. But after three sexless nights, seeing that babe on Thursday's drive gets your "*motor*" running, and she may even pop in and out of your mind all day.

*How can God help you when a natural desire leads to temptation?*

## **3. We Have A Strong, Regular Sex Drive. (Part 2)**

Your body isn't reliable for any spiritual battle, much less the battle for sexual purity and obedience. We easily identify with Paul: "*When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am!*" (Romans 7: 21-24) Your body often breaks ranks, engaging in battle against you. This traitorous tendency pushes our sexual drive to ignore God's standards. When this sexual drive combines with our natural male arrogance and our natural male desire to drift from the straight life, we're primed and fueled for sexual captivity.

*How do men use this as an excuse? How does God help us with our sex drive?*

#### **4. We Receive Sexual Gratification Through Our Eyes.**

Our eyes give men the means to sin broadly and at will. We don't need a date or a mistress. We don't ever need to wait. We have our eyes and can draw sexual gratification through them at any time. We're turned on by female nudity in any way, shape, or form. We aren't picky. It can come in a photograph of a nude stranger just as easily as in a romantic interlude with a wife. We have a visual ignition switch when it comes to viewing the female anatomy. Women seldom understand this because they aren't sexually stimulated in the same way. Their ignitions are tied to touch and relationship. Some view this visual aspect of our sexuality as shallow and dirty, even detestable. Often, a husband's effort to put a positive spin on this "vision factor" by suggesting their wives use it to advantage in the bedroom is met with disdainful scorn. Lisa, for instance, said, "So I suppose I have to buy one of those cheap teddies and prance around like some saloon girl!" Visual sexual gratification is no laughing matter in your fight for sexual purity. Given what the sight of nudity does to the pleasure centers of our brain, and these days it's pretty easy to see many naked or near-naked women, it's no wonder our eyes and mind resist control.

*What are some of the differences you noticed between men and women when it comes to sex? How does bouncing and starring your eyes help with sexual temptation?*

#### **5. Impurity Of Our Eyes Is Visual Foreplay. (Part 1)**

For males, impurity of the eyes is sexual foreplay, because foreplay is any sexual action that naturally takes us down the road to intercourse. Foreplay ignites passions, rocketing us by stages until we go all the way. God views foreplay outside marriage as wrong. We get a glimpse of this in Ezekiel 23: 3, where God, to portray the waywardness and apostasy of His chosen people, uses the picture of virgins in passionate sin: "In that land their breasts were fondled and their virgin bosoms caressed." (If you've ever argued that God doesn't address "petting" in the Bible, let Ezekiel 23: 3 serve as a corrective to your thinking.) Just as instructive is the overall thrust of New Testament teaching on sexual purity (study again the passages listed at the end of chapter 4) and the application of their standards mentally as well as physically. From God's viewpoint, sex is more than intercourse.

What acts constitute foreplay? Clearly, "caressing the breasts" is foreplay. Why? Intercourse is likely to follow. Remember the standard Jesus set? "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5: 27-28).

*How do you define what is sex? What are God's standards on what is sex?*

#### **6. Impurity Of Our Eyes Is Visual Foreplay. (Part 2)**

What acts constitute foreplay? Clearly, "caressing the breasts" is foreplay. Why? Intercourse is sure to follow. If not with her tonight, then at least with masturbation later back home. If not with her tonight, then maybe tomorrow night when her will has weakened. Masturbation while fantasizing about another woman besides your wife or "fantasy intercourse" while dreaming is the same as doing it. Remember the standard Jesus set? "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5: 27-28).

*In what ways can visual stimulation feel like foreplay? What kind of feelings and physical reactions can our eyes cause us when we look at sexual images?*

# Week Three: *We Dared to Change Our Standards*

## **1. You Can Choose True Manhood.**

Many of us don't have decent role models, even in our own fathers. At worst, our fathers don't care about God's sexual standards. For instance, after I (Fred Stoeker) proposed to Brenda, my dad pulled me aside and quietly said, "*Son, I know what the Bible says about premarital sex. You and I are both Christians and everything, but sex is too important for you to get married without having intercourse with Brenda first. You can't afford to marry a frigid girl.*"

Dad might have been a good role model in many ways, but in the arena of sexuality, he was a disaster. I wasn't alone. Tyler, a junior in our youth group, had a strong mother fighting for his purity, but when Tyler's father loaned him his pickup truck for dates and handed him the keys, he never failed to remind him, "*Don't forget, Ty, I've put a supply of condoms in the glove box for you.*" Then when Tyler returned the keys, his father asked, "*Did you get laid?*"

Brandon told me about being with a bunch of guys playing Nintendo late one Saturday night. He was supposed to be home at 11 P.M., but he fell asleep and didn't wake until 3 in the morning. Horrified, he raced home in his car to find his mom on her knees praying desperately for his safe return, tears streaming down her face. And where was dear old dad? He'd gone to bed hours earlier, smirking at his wife's prayers and saying brightly, "*Quit worrying! He's probably found some cute girl and is getting laid for the first time. It's about time for him to grow up.*"

Even the best fathers fear discussing sex and can't bring themselves to convey the truths they deeply long to share with their sons. Kenny told me, "*I remember when I was in high school and my father and I were driving home from a fishing trip in southern Missouri. I noticed his hands tightening the grip on the steering wheel, and then he said it: 'Son, you're getting older. Do you have any questions about girls?' And in my great wisdom at age fifteen, I emphatically said, 'No!' And nothing else was said the whole trip. In fact, the subject was never brought up again, ever. I didn't know anything then, and I'm still learning years later. What a loss,*" Kenny concluded. So who will be your role model?

*Share some examples you've experienced concerning discussions with a parent, older sibling or mentor on sexuality?*

## **2. Follow These Hands and Eyes.**

We hope your own father will be an excellent role model for you. If that's not possible, or if it's highly unlikely, the Bible provides role models who can fill your father's shoes if necessary. As you look at these Biblical characters, what can you learn about the meaning of true manhood, especially regarding how we deal with our eyes and minds and bodies?

For example, let's focus on hands for a moment. In a newsletter, author and speaker Dr. Gary Rosberg told of seeing a pair of hands that reminded him of the hands of his father, who had gone on to heaven. Gary continued to reminisce about what his father's hands meant to him. Then he shifted his thoughts to the hands of Jesus, noting this simple truth: "*They were hands that never touched a woman with dishonor.*" As I (Fred Stoeker) read this, sorrow tore at my soul. Oh, how I wished I could say that about my own hands! I have degraded women with my hands, and I regret the sin.

As I thought about it more, however, I realized that since my first year of salvation, I haven't touched a woman in dishonor. That made me feel good! I pondered Gary's words a little longer. Jesus' hands never touched a woman with dishonor, but Jesus said lusting with the eyes is the same as touching. Given that Jesus is sinless, I suddenly realized that Jesus not only never touched a woman with dishonor, He never even looked at a woman in dishonor. Could I say that? Actually, I couldn't.

Though I had received salvation, I was still looking at women in dishonor. "*Oh, don't be so hard on yourself,*" you might say. "*It's natural for guys to look. That's part of our nature.*" But what you're doing is stealing. The impure thought life is the life of a thief. You're stealing images that aren't yours. When you looked down the blouse of a woman who isn't your wife, you were stealing something that wasn't yours to take. When you had premarital sex, you touched someone who didn't belong to you.

It's just like walking down Main Street behind someone who drops a hundred-dollar bill, and you pick it up. If you

choose to keep the money instead of saying, “Hey, Mister!” then you’ve taken something you’re not entitled to. Similarly, if a well-built woman bends over and you stare at her breasts, you’re a thief. You need to leave that valuable creation in the hands of God and her husband or her future husband. When we’re thieves with our eyes, we’re grabbing sexual gratification from areas that don’t belong to us, from women who aren’t connected to us. In this arena, Jesus, having never looked on a woman with dishonor, is clearly our role model.

*In what ways did Jesus model God’s standards?*

### **3. Just A Man, A Great Model.**

“Well, sure!” you say. “He was God. It’s unfair to expect me to live like Him!” Maybe. But if, because of His deity, Jesus’ personal standard seems unattainable to you, let’s look at another manhood role model from Scripture in the area of sexual purity.

His name was Job, and though you wouldn’t think it, this man is the essential role model of sexual purity in Scripture. Job’s story unfolds in the Old Testament, where in the first chapter of the book that bears his name, we see God bragging about Job to Satan: “*Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil.*” (Job 1:8)

Was God proud of Job? You bet! He applauded His servant’s faithfulness in words of highest praise. If you walk in purity, blameless and upright, He’ll speak just as proudly of you. But if you don’t, this passage from Scripture may actually discourage you when you compare your life with Job’s. Don’t be discouraged. Instead, learn from Job.

First, we need to learn more about how Job did it. In Job 31:1, we see Job making this startling revelation: “*I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman.*” A covenant with his eyes! You mean he made a promise with his eyes to not gaze upon a young woman? Is that possible? Can it be true? It was true, and he must have been successful, or God wouldn’t have called him blameless and upright.

Job was successful; otherwise, he wouldn’t have made this promise: “*If my heart has been enticed by a woman, or if I have lurked at my neighbor’s door, then may my wife grind another man’s grain, and may other men sleep with her.*” (Job 31:9-10) Job had been totally successful, otherwise he couldn’t have made this statement from his heart. He knew he had lived right, and he knew his eyes were pure. He swore to it upon his wife and marriage, before God and man.

Let’s go back to the beginning of the story and read the opening verse of the book of Job: “*In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.*” Job was just a man! As you realize that, these precious words should gloriously flood your soul: If Job could do it, so can I. God wants you to know that even with your manhood with all its bothersome tendencies, you can rise above sexual impurity.

*Who are the male role models in your life? And how have they been role models to you?*

### **4. Making Your Ocular Covenant.**

When I (Fred) first gave serious consideration to Job’s example, I thought upon his words for days on end. My mind first turned to the word covenant. What was that? I learned that a covenant is an agreement between God and man. We promise to do something, and God promises to do His part. So how would I go about making an agreement with God? If I did make a promise to God not to stare at women’s bodies, could I be counted on to keep my word?

Day after day my mind returned to this covenant concept, trying to intellectually grasp it. Then it happened. I remember the moment—the exact spot on Merle Hay Road in Des Moines—when everything broke loose. Minutes before I had failed God with my eyes for the thirty millionth time, staring and lusting at a pretty female jogger as I drove past her. Boy, did I take a good look at her glistening body, so shapely in her jogging outfit. As soon as I passed by and she was a distant figure in my rearview mirror, my heart churned in guilt, pain, and sorrow. Driving down Merle Hay Road, I

gripped the wheel, and through clenched teeth I yelled out, “*That’s it! I’m through with this! I’m making a covenant with my eyes. I don’t care what it takes, and I don’t care if I die trying. It stops here. It stops here!*” That’s when the Lord gave me a concept that I call bouncing the eyes.

*Are you willing to make the same covenant Job made? How does the idea of bouncing your eyes make you feel? Challenge someone to make the same covenant you’re making and hold one another accountable.*

### **5. Don’t Follow this Sissy.**

You may be thinking, who in his right mind would ever make a covenant with his eyes like this? It seems crazy. What I did on Merle Hay Road may seem odd to you. But remember, acts of obedience often appear strange, even illogical. To help you understand where I’m coming from, let’s look in the Bible at the story of a man who just didn’t get it.

His name was Zedekiah, the greatest sissy in the Bible. He was reigning as the king in Jerusalem when the Babylonians were threatening to capture and destroy the city and bring an end to the nation of Judah. Zedekiah’s lack of manhood rose to the surface in the events described in Jeremiah 38. Jeremiah, as God’s prophet, knew what the outcome of the Babylonian invasion would be, and he made it known by stating: “*This is what the LORD says: ‘Whoever stays in this city will die by the sword, famine or plague, but whoever goes over to the Babylonians will live. He will escape with his life; he will live.’ And this is what the LORD says: ‘This city will certainly be handed over to the army of the king of Babylon, who will capture it.’*” (Jeremiah 38:2-3)

When Zedekiah heard about this, he let his officials throw Jeremiah into a deep cistern to shut him up. He later ordered his servants to lift the prophet out, but he still kept Jeremiah under arrest. Then one day, with Jerusalem under siege, the king summoned Jeremiah to a secret meeting. The prophet told the king what to do: “*This is what the LORD God Almighty, the God of Israel, says: ‘If you surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, your life will be spared and this city will not be burned down; you and your family will live. But if you will not surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, this city will be handed over to the Babylonians and they will burn it down; you yourself will not escape from their hands.’*” (Jeremiah 38:17-18)

Surrender! God, through Jeremiah, was asking the king to do something very difficult, something that made no sense. Who in their right mind would ever leave the fortress and go over to the enemy? It seemed crazy. Still, God’s Word was clear. The city would fall whether they stayed or left. Zedekiah expressed his fear, but Jeremiah remained firm, saying, “*Obey the LORD by doing what I tell you. Then it will go well with you, and your life will be spared*” (Jeremiah 38:20). But Zedekiah, indecisive and fearful, failed to obey. The right thing to do seemed too illogical, too costly. The results for himself, his family, and his nation were tragic.

*How does making a covenant with your eyes seem crazy to you? Are you still willing to do so? If not, why not?*

### **6. Man’s Man, or God’s Man?**

When it comes down to it, God’s definition of real manhood is straightforward and simple: Hear His Word and follow it. It’s not someone deciding that “*It’s my way or the highway,*” or “*I’ll do what I want when I want.*”

Have you ever known a guy whose beard is so heavy that he uses two blades to shave in the morning—one for each side of his face? By late afternoon, his four o’clock shadow is so thick that he has to shave again. Four blades in one day! For those of us who are “*smooth men,*” we hold this tough guy in awe. But God cares nothing about that.

When God looks around, He’s not looking for what everyone else calls a man’s man; He’s looking for “*God’s man.*” His definition of a man—someone who hears His Word and acts upon it—is easy to understand, but not easy to do. But at least it’s clear.

Meanwhile, the results of failing to be a man according to God's definition could have a tragic end. The fact is, as Galatians 6:7-8 tells us, God is not mocked: You reap what you sow, both the good and the bad. By now you understand God's command that you should eliminate every hint of sexual immorality from your life. If you do that, as Job did through his covenant with his eyes, then you're God's man. If you don't eliminate every hint, you are headed for trouble.

Earlier in the book of Jeremiah, we read these desperate words spoken by the prophet to the people: "*How long will you be unclean?*" (Jeremiah 13:27) That's the question for you as well: How long will you choose to be sexually unclean? How long will you keep shutting down the new life within you? We've seen what God expects through these role models. We've seen it can be done. Jesus and Job were authentic men, and they didn't mix standards even when their lives were on the line. Are you God's man, hearing the Word and doing it? If you want to turn things around, authenticity with God is the place to start.

*What are some sexual standards you've compromised in your life?*

# Week Four: *We Dared to Fight Back*

## **1. Developing Your Battle Plan.**

Before we started winning our battles for purity, we experienced a number of setbacks—partially because we hadn't really made a firm, line-in-the-sand decision. We sort of wanted purity, and we sort of didn't. We didn't understand the best approach to take, and besides, the whole business of sexual integrity was mysterious. No one has ever told us to starve our eyes.

Satan didn't want us to tell you, either, and his greatest attack weapon will be deception. He knows Jesus has already purchased your freedom. He also knows that once you understand how to starve your sex drive, you'll probably push him right out of the ring in short order.

So he deceives and confuses. He tricks you into thinking that you're a helpless victim. He tells you that sexual sin is just part of being a man and that there's nothing you can or should do about it. He tells you that you don't need to live a life of obedience because obedience is just another word for legalism. He tells you that rules will only weigh you down.

So let's remove the mystery surrounding your enemy. Scripture tells us he's like a roaring lion, prowling around, to and fro, looking for someone to devour. He is the enemy. Don't listen to him.

*What actions have you taken to fight for sexual purity? Which have worked and which haven't?*

## **2. Your Objective.**

Your goal is sexual purity. Here's a good, simple working definition of it: You're sexually pure when sexual gratification only comes from your wife.

Wait a minute. I'm not married! We know that, but sexual purity has the same definition whether you're married or single. When you're sexually pure, it means you're not seeking sexual gratification. So how do you get to that point?

For teens and young adults, sexual gratification comes from three places: the eyes, the mind, and the body. Therefore, as in any war, you must blockade the "shipping lanes" of the eyes and mind that drive you toward sexual sin and that keep your enemy strong. Beyond that, you must also make sure that you have healthy, positive affections and attitudes in your relationships with girls. In other words, you want your heart to be right and your boundaries clear.

To accomplish this, you need to build three perimeters of defense into your life: With your eyes, your mind, and your heart.

Think of the first line of defense—your eyes—as a wall with "Keep Out" signs around it. That sign defends your eyes by being a covenant like the one Job set up: "I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman." You defend your eyes by training them to "bounce" from anything sensual.

The second line of defense is your mind. With the mind, you don't necessarily block out the objects of lust, but you learn to evaluate and capture them. A key support verse is 2 Corinthians 10:5: "We take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." You must train your mind to take thoughts captive, something your mind hasn't been inclined to do.

Your third line of defense is your heart. This innermost defense perimeter is built by strengthening the authenticity of your Christian love for the girls you date, as well as increasing your commitment to becoming a blessing to others. You want to honor and cherish every young woman you date, just as you hope that the guy dating your future wife is honoring and cherishing her.

So there's your battle plan. That's it—nothing more, nothing less. As soon as you set up the perimeters, you'll have freedom from sexual impurity. This attack plan may seem too simple to be effective, but disregard that thought.

*Write up and share your battle plan that includes your eyes, mind, and heart. (One suggestion is to write it up as "Step 1, Step 2, Step 3.")*

### **3. Impurity is a Habit.**

You may think impurity is genetic, like the color of our eyes. I'm male, so that's why I have impure eyes and an impure mind. But we can't blame our roving eyes on genetics, even though we men are definitely more visually oriented than women. The problem is that some men excuse themselves as victims of impure eyes and thoughts, as if that absolves them from all responsibility.

The truth is, impurity is a habit. It lives and acts like a habit. When some hot-looking babe in a French bikini walks by your beach towel, your eyes have the habit of locking on her, sliding up and down. When the cheerleader with the biggest breasts walks past you in the hall, your eyes run away with her. When the Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue arrives in your mailbox, you fantasize over the curves and crevices.

You do these things because you're in the habit of doing them. Haven't you been doing them since you discovered girls back in sixth grade? Since checking out the "goods" is only a habit and not some victimizing spell, it can be changed. And we believe it can be done in as little as six weeks.

So how do you break the bad habit of locking on to every rack and tush that swivels your way? You simply replace it with a new and better habit. Sure, it will take some practice. But if you can commit to doing this for the next four to six weeks, the old habit that seemed so strong will become unnatural.

*Share the places where you struggle with your eyes. And share why that location is a struggle.*

### **4. Impurity Works like a Habit.**

Your life is full of routine. If you're still in school, then the alarm clock rings precisely at 6:30. You slowly take your time waking up, jump into the shower, get dressed, and eat your favorite bowl of cereal in a rush to leave the house at 7:35. Each morning, you don't even have to think about what to do next. It's like Groundhog Day all over again.

You've also developed similar habits in the sexual arena. You might be saying to yourself, "*I can't work this hard at purity for the rest of my life.*" But if you can just hang in there a little longer, that good habit of purity will gain a foothold. Then you'll be engaged in a fight that requires much less effort. Currently, you sin without even thinking; your eyes gravitate toward any bouncing breasts that mosey by. Without thinking, your bad habits start kicking in. But with the habit of purity in place, when the shapely cheerleader walks down the hall toward you, you'll look away without even thinking. If you want to peek, you'll have to force your eyes to do so.

*What's an impure bad habit or two in your life? What steps will you take to curb those bad habits?*

### **5. Impurity Fights like an Addiction.**

Impurity of the eyes and mind lives like a habit but fights like an addiction. Many habits are addictive. Smokers have the urge to smoke. Drug users "*get a jones.*" Alcoholics need an "*eye opener*" to start the day. In overcoming some addictions, the addictive source can be gradually reduced. For others, the best method is cold turkey.

What works best with sexual impurity is going cold turkey. You cannot just taper down. We tried, and it didn't work because we found our minds and eyes were too tricky and deceitful. With tapering, whatever impurity you do allow seems to multiply in its impact, and the habit won't break. Besides, tapering down also brings with it the possibility of sexual binges that might go on for days. Binges crush your spirit.

*"I used to try to stop my sexual sin without really understanding what I was fighting,"* said Cliff. *"I might grit my teeth and do well for a while, but then suddenly, maybe because of some chick-flick or some lustful thoughts that just got carried away, I would masturbate. Then I would say to myself, 'Well, since I failed, I might as well fail big.' I would masturbate two, three times a*

day for the next week or two before I could regain the strength to fight again. I can't tell you how many times I've binged like this." So cold turkey is the way to go. You shut off the spigot by totally starving your eyes of all things sensual. Starving the eyes will also help you overcome the desire for premarital sex with the women you date. You'll begin to see your date as a person and not an object. Now don't expect the habits to die too easily. You can expect an inner "urge to fail" since you're accustomed to grabbing sexual gratification through your eyes, anytime and anywhere you please.

Remember, these bring chemical highs, and for a time your body will fight for these highs. This sexual gratification has served to gradually increase your sex drive since puberty. Cutting this source of gratification through the eyes works to decrease your sex drive and make purity easier. But remember, it will always be a fight to some degree. There will always be spiritual opposition. The enemy constantly whispers in your ear. He doesn't want you to win this fight, and he knows the lies that break down a young man's confidence and will to win. You can expect to hear lies and plenty of them. Here's a list of some of the all-time favorites. (After each lie, we state the actual truth.)

**Satan:** "You're the only one dealing with this problem. If anyone ever finds out, you'll be the laughingstock of the youth group!"

**The truth:** Most young men are dealing with this problem, so no one will laugh.

**Satan:** "You failed again. You'll never be able to train your eyes. It's impossible."

**The truth:** It isn't impossible. Didn't Job train his eyes? He was a man just like you.

**Satan:** "You're being so legalistic! You're splitting hairs."

**The truth:** God still has standards of behavior for us, and it's still a good idea to live purely by His standards.

**Satan:** "Your plan will never work. You're wanting the impossible!"

**The truth:** The plan will work, because for most men the problem of sexual impurity is nothing more than bad choices evolving into bad habits.

**Satan:** "Why fight it? Sex is fun and doesn't hurt anybody."

**The truth:** You can't always see the costs of sexual impurity, but they are there, and they are greater than you think.

As you can see, the opposition is vicious and merciless. To set up your first line of defense, start with your eyes. You want to train them to "bounce." If you can bounce your eyes for six weeks, you can win this war.

*How does the enemy work to get you to compromise your sexual standards?*

## **6. Bouncing the Eyes.**

In the past your eyes have always bounced toward the sexual and not away from it. To combat years and years of this reflexive action, you need to train your eyes to immediately bounce away when it comes upon a sexy image—much like the way you jerk your hand away from a hot stove. Here it is in a nutshell: When your eyes bounce toward a woman's attributes, they must bounce away immediately.

But why must the bounce be immediate? One might argue that a glance is just a glance. A glance doesn't linger. Granted, a glance is different from staring open-mouthed until drool pools at your feet. But a glance can be more than enough "eye juice" to give you that little chemical high, that little pop. In our experience, bouncing away immediately is clean and easy for the mind to understand and doesn't give the mind wiggle room to "lock and load."

Watch out! As we've just said, when you start bouncing your eyes, your body will fight you in peculiar, unexpected ways. Since sexual sin has an addictive nature, your body will not give up on its pleasures without a fight. You'll have to creatively look for ways to stay visually pure, and you do that through these two logical steps:

1. Study yourself. How and where are you attacked the most?
2. Design your defense for each of the greatest enemies you've identified.

Your first step is listing your own "greatest enemies." What are the most obvious and prolific sources of sensual images coming your way? Where do you look most often? Where are you weakest? In choosing them, remember that they

must be areas from which you visually draw sexual satisfaction. Don't make the mistake of choosing non-visual weaknesses for this list, like:

1. Showers
2. Being home alone
3. Studying late

We can all understand why these can be troublesome. In the shower, you're nude with warm water cascading down your body. That can be sensual. When you're home alone, no one's around to discover you if you're looking at things you shouldn't or decide to masturbate. When you're studying late, you feel sorry for yourself and need "comfort." But such weak spots needn't be targeted if you train your eyes to bounce and eliminate the visual stimuli. With no food for the mental fantasies, the sexual fevers that draw your mind to sin will dissipate. These situations will lose their power naturally.

*How have you seen yourself get closer to God since you started bouncing and starving your eyes?*

*To become a sexually pure Christian man, sexual purity has to go beyond a study and become a lifestyle. For more information, or if you'd like to start a weDARED group with some friends or in your church, check out [WeDared.com](http://WeDared.com) or call or email Paul Scott at 800-NEW-LIFE or [pscott@newlife.com](mailto:pscott@newlife.com).*