

“One Hand in the Cookie Jar”
Ephesians 5:3-7

Ice Breaker:

Tell about a time it was very hard for you to defer a reward, a relationship, an opportunity, a pleasure, a financial benefit etc. but you were very glad you did.

What is something you have chosen to put restraints, limits on because you value it so highly?

Read: Ephesians 5:3-7

1. What insight, principle or observation did you find to be most fresh, eye-opening or troubling? Explain.
2. Who is Paul challenging in verses 3-5? Is it still the same group of people in verses 6-7?
3. Why is it shameful to even talk about sexual perversions others do in secret? Why is greed included? (verse 3)
4. What kind of elements would make a joke evil and foolish? (verse 4) Is God okay with telling really funny jokes and a hearty laugh?
5. Why does Paul equate 'greed' with 'idolatry' in verse 5? In what ways are they similar?
6. Verses 5-6 sound like anyone who sins through immorality, impurity or greed can't be saved. How do I John 1:9 and Romans 8:1-5 help answer this question? What point is Paul making here?
7. How do intentional expressions of thanksgiving work to counter the believer's attraction to the things listed in verses 3-5?
8. What would you tell your friend who claims Christ, but is living in a sexual relationship that is distorted from God's ideal? They claim Jesus understands because He loves and cares for them, wants them to be happy and not lonely.
9. What would you tell a friend who says, "my porn viewing doesn't hurt anybody?"

Pray for each other:

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God wants us to enjoy clean holiness and the freeing power to live rightly. But, in reality, we don't live like free people. We feel stuck, discouraged, even apathetic, especially in the area of sexual morality. The Bible passage this morning brings clarity to our confused thinking, explaining why sexual distortions are incompatible with the Christian life. We need to think (and then also act) differently to keep from missing out on God's very best for us.

1. Sex is good.
2. Relationship killers. (verses 3-4)
3. Serious examination. (verses 5-7)
4. The RX. (verse 4b)

Next Step:

If you are going to starve your mind from something harmful, you must feed it with something life-giving. What specifically is God calling you to starve? What will you feed your heart? (remember it's not about a determination to try harder this time . . . it's about living in keeping with who you now are, your identity in Christ.)