

MARCH 15TH, 2026

The Searcher



Published By



SOUTHAVEN
CHURCH of CHRIST

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SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES AND SEEKING THE LOST

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WHAT DOES GOD SEE WHEN HE SEES ME? (2)

Robert Jefferies

Have you ever noticed that some of the songs we sing center around the idea of being a soldier? For example, I'm in the Lord's army, Hard fighting soldier, Soldiers of Christ arise. Throughout the New Testament one of the characteristics of God's people is the idea of a soldier. When the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, notice what he said about this very subject. "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Timothy 2:3-4). Let's consider the marks of a good soldier?

A Soldier SPENDS Time In Battle. The Apostle Paul used the word "warreth." Each day a Christian is involved in a battle. No, it is not one that involves flesh and blood, but one that pertains to the battle between good and evil, right and wrong (Ephesians 6:10). May we daily fight the good fight (1 Timothy 6:12) so that one day we can echo the same words Paul did when he came to the end of his life. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7).

A Soldier SUFFERS Hardship. When writing to Timothy, the Apostle Paul would use the word "hardness." The word hardness means "to suffer."¹ Sometimes we may have to suffer for the cause of Christ. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12). If there was anyone who knew about suffering hardship it was the Apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 11:23-28).

A Soldier Avoids Getting SIDETRACKED. The Apostle Paul would add, "no man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life." The word entangleth means to "interweave."² Years ago, on Sunday evenings, my wife and I would watch a show called "The Unit." This show focused on a top secret U.S. Army special operation team that carried out dangerous missions. One of the famous lines of the show that used by the wives was "a distracted soldier is a dead soldier." As soldiers in the Lord's Army, let's make sure that we do not get sidetracked by the world from our spiritual mission.

A Soldier STRIVES To Please. The Apostle Paul concluded this thought with "that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." Our top goal should be to please our commander in chief, Jesus Christ. May we strive to have the same motto for our life as Paul did, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21).

When God sees you and me, does He see a hard fighting soldier on the battlefield?

¹ Strong's.

² Ibid.

HOW TO KILL THAT WEED IN YOUR GARDEN?

Noah Olsen

What is one of a gardener's worst enemy? Is it bugs? What about critters? What about bad soil? One of the most common problems in gardens are weeds. Weeds come subtly, in large quantities, and can ruin pure gardens. They are small and silent, but harmful and deadly. Gardeners can prepare their gardens so that they do not inflict the good crop they have. It takes work, sweat, and sacrifice, but it can be done. Like weeds are to gardeners, sexual lust is to men.

Lust is an all-person problem (cf. Genesis 39:7-12), but most of its captives are males (Proverbs 6-7). Lust has taken the young, the old, the rich, and the poor. Marriages, churches, and families have been burnt by its fire. Few sins are easier to commit than lust in the modern world, for the internet, movies, and handheld devices give people outlets for indulgence. Immodesty only breeds lust, and the flagrant flaunting of the body only keeps lust's fire alive. Because of the enslavement of many, we want to know how to defeat this inflictor. Using the illustration of a gardener and the weeds, here are ten practical helps to overcome the sin of lust.

1. Determine not to have weeds in your garden (Job 31:1). Gardeners plant vegetables and fruit; they determine NOT to have weeds. They till the ground and prepare to plant fruit, not weeds. Job made a "covenant" (ברית [beriyth]) ("compact") with his eyes. He decided before the enticement that he would not fall for lust's allurements. You will be less likely to fall to the weed of lust if you determine that you will not have it in your garden. Decide beforehand not to look, read, or watch (cf. 1 Peter 1:13).

2. Watch for certain soils where weeds are likely to rise (James 1:14). Sunlight, certain soil, and water are needed for weeds to grow. Lust occurs in certain promiscuous locations (beaches, movies, or swimming pools). If you do not feed it, it will not grow. Note what triggers you. James said, "every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust." So that you can guard your heart (Proverbs 4:23), read the reviews of movies beforehand. Stay away from sexual movies. If there are sexual content and nudity in a movie, refrain from it. Don't justify watching it with "I'll close my eyes," or "I can handle it." Refrain from beaches with myriads of people and public swimming pools with great populations. Do not keep looking at the pictures on the internet and stay away from social media if the urge to sin is too strong. Sin is too destructive and your heart too valuable. "A wealthy couple desired to employ a chauffeur. The wife advertised, the applicants were screened, and (4) candidates were brought to her for the final selection. She called the prospective men to her balcony and pointed out a brick wall alongside the driveway. She asked the men, "How close do you think you could come to that wall w/out scratching my car?" The 1st man felt he could drive w/in a foot of the wall w/out damaging the car. The 2nd felt sure he could come w/in (6) inches. The 3rd believed he could get w/in (3) inches. The 4th candidate said, "I do not know how close I could come to the wall w/out damaging your car. Instead, I would try to stay as far away from that wall as I could." [1]

3. Spray the ground with herbicide. Herbicides prevent weeds from rising in garden beds. Lustful sins need preventors; electronic preventors are especially helpful. Install platforms on your laptop and/or phone so that pornographic sites are not enticing. Apps like Covenant Eyes or Freedom Fight help fight pornographic addictions. Movies can be filtered through apps called Vid-angel or Clear play. Make sure the platform you use works and be sure you keep paying the bill. It is better to pay with your wages, than for you to receive wages from God later (Romans 6:23). It is better to prepare for the inflictors today, so that you can be free from the shame and punishment tomorrow.

4. Ask for help from a fellow gardener (James 5:16). Weeds come in abundance, and it can take a long time to get them out of a garden. Gardeners may ask another gardener to help remove them or ask for advice on how to remove them. Like weeds, lust is big and sometimes hard to get rid of. It multiplies until the sin is abundant. If it is too much to handle alone, like the gardener, ask for help. If you struggle with lust or pornographic addiction, have a designated partner you text or call every day. Celebrate successful weeks and discuss downfalls. Confession can cause cessation of sins, so openly admit weak days. Ask a victor you know who has struggled with it in the past for aid. Sometimes it is better to ask for help than handle such alone (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).

5. Read up on weeds (Psalm 119:11). Familiarizing oneself with weeds helps gardeners get rid of them. He needs articles, journals, and information that can be trusted. You need a manual to help you read up on lust. Use the Word to help see the effects of lust. Study examples of those who fell to it (2 Samuel 11) and read about how to be like those who overcame it (Genesis 39). Memorize Scripture too. Fighting specific sins with specific Scriptures is a good plan. When you are tempted, think of Scripture. Memorize the following Scriptures: Exodus 20:17; Job 31:1; Proverbs 6:25; Matthew 5:28; Romans 12:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:7.

6. Take drastic measures to get rid of weeds (Matthew 5:29-30). Weeds in the garden are not grounds for dismissal but for action. Gardener's may uproot them or spray weed killer to eradicate them. Such may be a daunting and detailed task.

but it is worth preserving the fruit. Lust must be eradicated and killed, and it may take extreme measures to get it done. It may mean throwing away a laptop or phone. It might be uninstalling the app or refraining from watching TV. Maybe a couple of counseling sessions are scheduled. Do whatever it takes. As weeds kill fruit, so does lust kill purity.

7. Don't allow even one weed to grow (1 Corinthians 5:6). New weeds can appear in a garden within twelve hours.[2] One weed can do much damage for the following that it brings. One lustful look can lead to a lifetime of consequences. Do not justify the look with "its just one time," "it won't happen again," or "it's just one picture." A man's famous last words of purity began with a justification in his mind regarding an "innocent" look. Don't even look once!

8. Call Weeds, "Weeds" (Genesis 39:9). No matter what the gardener calls them, weeds are still weeds. Name changes do not result in essence changes. Lust is not:

- "Appreciating beauty."
- "Exploring manhood."
- "An immature childhood action."

Joseph called fornication wickedness and Jesus said, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matthew 5:28). Husbands should think of lust as mockery, wives should believe it is betrayal, and teenagers should remember that it is impure.

9. Stay busy cultivating fruit (Galatians 5:22-23). The more fruit that is planted, the less room there are for weeds to grow. The gardener who daily upkeep his garden will not allow weeds to grow. A man who stays busy in the work of God and cultivates fruit will be less likely to fall to lust. He should cultivate:

- Love. If he cultivates love, he will respect another woman's body.
- Joy. If he cultivates joy, he will not be depressed with the torment lust can bring.
- Peace. If he cultivates peace, he will not be restless to always be on the search for the next picture.
- Patience. If he cultivates patience, he will endure with purity and forsake the trials of lust.
- Kindness. If he cultivates kindness,[3] he will treat all women with respect and not as objects.
- Goodness. If he cultivates goodness, he will be so busy helping others he will have no time for lust.
- Faithfulness. If he cultivates faithfulness, he will understand that living in lust is unfaithful.
- Meekness. If he cultivates meekness, he will tame himself from lust and moderate his sexual desire to marriage alone.[4]
- Self-Control. If he cultivates self-control, he will stop himself from lust when the temptation arises.
- Lust harms cultivation and a lack of cultivation is a cause for removal from the vine (John 15:2, 6).

10. Ponder the problems weeds produce (Proverbs 6:25-32). Weeds cause problems. Like weeds, lust causes problems in a man's fruitful garden. It replaces looking into the Word with looking into sensuality. It harms the environment of both the home and the church. It overtakes a man's life so much so that adultery, familial problems, and occupational turmoil can result. Many sins would never have been committed if the consequences were pondered beforehand. Ponder the consequences of the lustful look.

Are you struggling with this sin today? Do you find it hard to look away? Jesus offers relief. Sexual desire is natural and the expression beautiful, only if it is fulfilled through right outlet (Proverbs 5:15-20; Hebrews 13:4). Fruitful gardeners eradicate weeds out of their garden. Are you a good gardener of your soul (Deuteronomy 4:9)?

Endnotes

[1]<https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/lust-joseph-rodgers-sermon-on-sin-general-84639?page=2&wc=800>

[2]<https://gardentabs.com/how-fast-garden-weeds-grow/>

[3]Thayer says this word means moral goodness and integrity. Adam Clarke added "polished manners."

[4]John Stacy, Preaching Through Galatians, p. 206

Sunday Sermons

Keeping In Step With God (AM)

How Are You Standing? (PM)

Bible Passages To Consider

"Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me" (Psalm 119:133).

IN NEED OF PRAYER

Larry Butler is in Baptist Desoto Hospital. He is experiencing a lot of pain and is having tests run. **Veronica Rapp** was scheduled to have an iron infusion on Friday.

Betty Culbreath fell recently and fractured a rib. **Meredith Peek** is in Baptist Desoto Hospital. She is being treated for pneumonia. She is also having fluid removed.

Angie Schrimsher is awaiting tests results.

Karen Oglesby is being treated at Lakeside for depression and her mental health. She is improving and has been placed on medication.

Linda Stone is in stage 4 kidney failure.

Dorothy Butler spent some time in the hospital recently. She received a blood transfusion. She is now back at home, but very weak.

Rannie Butler is taking therapy at Senatobia Healthcare and Rehab.

Joyce Valentine has completed her chemotherapy. She is being placed on a management medication.

Jean Jones is taking physical therapy at Desoto Healthcare.

Ronnie Sowell, father of Erin Sowell, is scheduled to see a new cardiologist to get a second opinion.

Pat McCuller, mother of Becky Smith, is recovering from back surgery.

David Jones, friend of Terry & Brenda Harris-member at Goodman Oaks, is in Baptist Desoto Hospital. He is being treated for pneumonia.

Shawn Everson, cousin of Larry Everson, is recovering from open heart surgery.

Please continue to remember the following:

Barbara Day, Brenda Dreher, Danna Smart, Alan Stone, Debbie Shull, Pat Pierce, Beverly Parnell, Lucy Chamberlain, Vern Schrimsher, & Don Sykes in your prayers.

BATTLING CANCER

Please remember those who are fighting, or recovering from cancer: **Alan Stone; Brenda Dreher; Pam Eaton; Larry Butler; Charlene Farris; Justin Camp**, husband of Kim Camp; **Andrew Utz**, great nephew of Peggy Shull; **Varda Cole**, sister in law of Linda Davis; **Don Cheathour**, friend of the Sykes family; **Joe Daly**, online

viewer in England; **Houston Hall**, great nephew of Karen Oglesby & Beth Roney; **David Taylor**, neighbors of the Sykes; **Dan Manuel**, friend of Tommy & Peggy Shull; **Heather Butler**, daughter of Lewis Dawson; **Vickie Parker**, sister of Nick Parker; **Kim Butler**, sister in law of Larry Butler; **Lily Jane Jordan**, neighbor's grand-daughter of Terry & Brenda Harris; **Oakleigh Free**, great granddaughter of Alan & Linda Stone; **Mandi Singer**, friend of Erica Stuckey; **Mandy Dunbar**, friend of Erica Stuckey; **TJ Holt**, cousin of Amber Wallis; **Margarito Zuniga**, father of former member Alan Zuniga; **Becca Reynolds**, niece of Anita Sanders; **Laura Sowell**, mother of Erin Sowell, **Doreen Harris**, former member, **Glenn Jenkins**, the husband of Bonnie Reid's niece, **Carol Tierce**, sister of Peggy Shull & **Whitley Joy**, great niece of Larry & Elaine Melton.

SHUT-INS/ NURSING HOME

Lucy Chamberlain; Debbie Shull; Beverly Parnell; Pam Eaton; Tommy Eaton, State Veterans Home in Oxford, MS; **Phyllis Smith**, The Gold-ton at Southaven Room #116.

MEN TO SERVE - March 15, 2026

Preside: Gary Barch & Allen Roberts

Serve: Jerry Mitchell, Clint Hawkins, Sammy Terrell, Colin Iglinsky, TJ Johnson, Tim Vanderhook

AM Opening Prayer: Aaron Gallagher

AM Closing Prayer: Larry Nagle

PM Opening Prayer: Neal Weatherford

PM Closing Prayer: Bill Phillips

Wed. Opening Prayer: Tim Willis

Wed. Closing Prayer: Carter Gahagan

Announcements: Robert Jefferies

Song Leader: Jason Bayless

Scripture Reading: RJ Jolomi

Security: John Stubblefield

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 22: Potluck Luncheon

April 19: Potluck Luncheon

April 19-23: Gospel Meeting with BJ Clarke

April 25: Ladies Day with Celine Sparks

June 14-20: Sardis Lake Christian Camp

MARCH FOOD TEAM

Captain: Shelley Selby

Bonnie Reid, Charlotte Dunaway, Morgan Willis, Wanda Cochran

REMINDER:
If you are a song leader, scripture reader, or have opening prayer, you are asked to sit on the front pew when worship begins.

OUR RECORDS	
Bible Study	206
A.M. Worship	301
P.M. Worship	175
P.M. Wed. Worship	149
Contribution	\$13,870



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Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Class.....	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....	10:00 a.m.
Sunday P.M. Worship.....	1:00 p.m.
Wednesday P.M. Service.....	7:00 p.m.

ELDERS

Gary Barch
Larry Everson
David Rister

DEACONS

Bruce Dunaway
Michael Gahagan
Aaron Gallagher
TJ Johnson
John Stubblefield
Chris Tice
Andy Young

MINISTERS

Robert Jefferies
Josh Walker