

Junior 1 Year 3 Book 4 Lesson 12  
**Understanding Purity and Sexual Temptation**  
 Passages: As listed in the lesson.

*Memory Verse*

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God.” (1 Thessalonians 4:3–5)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. God created sexual intimacy for the purpose of marriage.</li> <li>2. The process of temptation begins in our own desires.</li> <li>3. Sexual temptation is closely tied to lust, which is a form of greed and possessive desire.</li> </ol>	<p>God is holy and wants us to be holy.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Swim against the tide of this world.</li> <li>2. God’s word and the fullness of the Holy Spirit will help us to overcome our desires.</li> <li>3. Be strategic in avoiding temptation.</li> </ol>

*Overview*

**Events and Spiritual Teachings**

- A. God’s Intentions: Sex Within Marriage
- B. The Danger of Sexual Desires
- C. Understanding Lust

**Life Application**

- 1. Swimming Against the Tide
- 2. Strategically Avoiding Temptation

**Memory Verse**

**Conclusion:** To follow God’s will, we need to understand the root of sexual sin – our own desires – and the nature of lust, which leads to destruction. This understanding, along with the power of God’s word and the Holy Spirit, will help us to overcome our desires and temptations.

## Events and Spiritual Teachings

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### Introduction

Before we begin our lesson, I'd like to ask something: have you ever given in to temptation, only to regret it afterward? We have all experienced this regret. But why did you give in to temptation in the first place? It is likely that you gave in because you were neither alert to it nor prepared to face it.

The Bible teaches us repeatedly that we must be prepared because our enemy Satan will attack at any moment. His goal is to steal, kill, and destroy (Jn 10:10). Paul also taught us: "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong" (1 Cor 16:13). We have to be ready because our enemy will attack us at any moment. Like a soldier at war, we have to remain strong and keep our guard up. And we already know the best way to do this. Jesus told us, "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt 26:41).

The world today has casual and ever-changing standards. While there are many different temptations that we will face, one of the most difficult to resist is sexual temptation. The Bible teaches us many reasons why we need to avoid and flee this temptation, and how such temptation will affect us spiritually and physically. Today, we'll be taking a closer look at the Bible's teachings regarding worldly temptations and sexual purity.

### A. God's Intentions: Sex Within Marriage

Some might ask why God invented sex if sexual purity is such an important matter. Let's read Genesis 2:25. It is important to remember that God invented sex. It is God's gift to human beings, designed to be a union between one man and one woman, and a beautiful thing within a marriage. God had even commanded Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful and multiply" (1:28). Within a marriage blessed by God, sex is good, pleasurable, and honorable. However, the world around us has distorted the boundaries that God intended during creation. God designed sex for marriage, but the world has twisted His intentions due to human desire.

### The Importance of Purity

One question you may have heard or asked yourself is, why is purity—specifically sexual purity—such an important matter in our faith? Why should we keep our body pure? There are many good reasons why we need to keep our body pure. God's standard for us is a pure body and a pure spirit. His standard written in the Bible has not changed and will not ever change. And we need to make a commitment to God's standard. Let's read the following verses. According to them, what are the reasons we need to keep our bodies pure? Write down the reason for each verse in your notebook.

	Verse	Reason
1	1 Thess 4:3–5	<i>It is God's will.</i>
2	1 Cor 6:19	<i>My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.</i>
3	1 Cor 6:20; 1 Pet 1:18–19	<i>I was bought at a high price with the precious blood of Jesus Christ.</i>
4	Heb 13:4	<i>God will judge fornicators and adulterers.</i>
5	1 Pet 1:15–16	<i>God has called us to holiness.</i>

God wants us to be set apart from the world. He loves us and wants us to be holy, because as a holy God, He cannot dwell or abide in sin. This means we must stay sanctified by keeping a strong conviction in God's word with the help of the Holy Spirit. When you are filled with the Holy Spirit, God will give you the strength and guidance to stand strong, even against scorn, ridicule, misunderstanding, or pressure.

The opinions and ways of the world matter less to you. But without the power of the Holy Spirit, you will be easily affected by the world's view on dating and sex. If you reflect on yourself at this moment, to what extent are you filled with the Holy Spirit? Do your convictions lie in yourself, or in God's word? Do you hold firmly to all of the verses that we read? Are you committed to God's standard?

## **B. The Danger of Sexual Desires**

One of the reasons we require the power of the Holy Spirit is because sexual desires are dangerously alluring. Let's look at an example in the Bible to help us understand the process of being tempted by sexual desire, and the danger of letting such desires take control. Do you recall the story of Samson? He was one of the last judges, and even before his birth, he was dedicated to God as a Nazirite and a judge for Israel (Num 6:1–21; Judg 13:4–5). He was known for his immense strength, but he was also incredibly weak in his heart. Let's read Judges 14:1–3.

God has given us physical desires, such as eating or sleeping, and also internal desires, such as peace or love. These God-given desires have all been given to allow us to find fulfillment in our lives. This also includes our desire for physical intimacy. Sexual desire was also made and given by God, but only for the purpose of oneness and unity within a marriage. In which case, what was wrong with Samson's desire? To understand the problem, we need to understand the process of temptation according to the Bible.

### **The Process of Temptation**

#### **1. Step One: Desire**

Let's read James 1:14–15. "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death." According to these verses, where does temptation start? (*It starts with our desire.*) When Samson saw this woman, he wanted to marry her immediately. He didn't even know her well. Rather, his rash decision was driven by his initial feeling of love and physical attraction. Despite being set apart by God, Samson let his desires take root.

#### **2. Step Two: Drawn Away**

James wrote that we are tempted when we are "drawn away" and "enticed" by our own desires. This is similar to being lured by bait, only to be caught in a trap. Like with a trap laid by a fisherman or hunter, the bait attracts the prey, but the result is only death for the creature who falls for it. Samson's desire drew him away, and what came after that? He told his father, "Get her for me, for she pleases me well" (Judg 14:3). He didn't care about God's will (Deut 7:3–4) nor his parents' opinion. Instead of exercising self-control, he let his desire for personal pleasure and happiness control his actions completely. It was a desire born from his sinful nature, which became problematic.

#### **3. Step Three: Sin**

After being drawn away, the temptation of desire is "conceived" and "gives birth to sin." Samson's desire for the woman was conceived in the form of his demand to marry her on the spot. Even King David fell into this same process of temptation. Let's read 2 Samuel 11:2–4. He saw that she was "very beautiful," and his desire resulted in a powerful temptation that he could not resist. In the end, he sent for her and slept with her. He gave in to sexual lust and caused two deaths: the death of Uriah, and that of his own son with Bathsheba.

From the above three steps, we can see that the desire that begins in our mind can result in a very serious consequence: eternal, spiritual separation from God, which is death (Rom 6:23). From David's

example, and other examples, such as Eli's sons Phinehas and Hophni (1 Sam 2:25, 34), and Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1–10), we can see that sin can also produce physical death. This is why we should not allow ourselves to fantasize about anything that is sinful in God's eyes. Satan is a mastermind who knows how to slowly lead you away from God, using the desires that already exist within you. This is especially true of our sexual desires.

Samson's example teaches us how powerful and beguiling our sexual desire can be. Physical intimacy is something that God gave to us for us to share with our life partner, and no one else. Succumbing to sexual temptation outside of our marriage means giving up the sanctity that God has called us to, and letting our desires lead us to spiritual separation from God. So, it is vital for us to know how to deal with sexual temptation, and to practice curbing our sexual urges. If we fail to exert control over our desires and instead let them control us, they may lead us to sin, and from sin, to death.

### **C. Understanding Lust**

Sexual temptations are closely tied to lust, which is an intense sexual craving. While it is not wrong to like someone, the Bible frequently cautions us of the dangers of fleshly lusts. As opposed to physical intimacy and oneness within a marriage, lust is a form of possessive desire that is fueled by greed. It is a selfish urge that focuses on pleasing oneself without considering the consequences. Feeling sexual desire is normal, but when it takes place outside of marriage, it becomes a dangerous tool of Satan's.

#### **The Destructive Nature of Lust**

##### **1. Blinds us to the consequences of our actions**

Let's turn to 2 Samuel 13:1–19. Amnon fell in love with his half-sister Tamar, to the point that he desired to sleep with her. This desire, however, was not love – it was lust, an intense sexual craving that consumed him. He ignored Tamar's desperate pleas, as well as her suggestion to approach their father. In the end, he raped her. But what happened after that? He immediately "hated her exceedingly, so that the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her" (v. 15).

##### **2. Leads to sin and destruction**

As a result of Amnon's evil deeds, his love turned to hatred, Tamar became desolate and disgraced, and her brother Absalom widened the rift in their family by murdering Amnon two years later. Amnon should have known that nothing good would have resulted from his actions, but he was completely blinded by his lust. It is a "fire that consumes to destruction" (Job 31:12).

When we follow our desires and go against God's commands, it is easy to forget that our actions will have consequences. In the best-case scenario, we hurt ourselves. In the worst case, we hurt someone else, and even experience misery and spiritual death. God wants us to be sanctified (1 Thess 4:3–5). But fleshly lusts "war against the soul" (1 Pet 2:11) and lead us to sexual immorality.

As both Samson and Amnon demonstrated, lust is self-centered and thinks only of "I," or "me." It leads us into sin, makes us deaf to sound advice, and blinds us to the potential consequences, including our spiritual death. So instead of allowing our desires to control us and our lusts to blind us, we must learn to open our eyes to God's will and sanctify our hearts and minds with His word.

*Teachers: The following teaching may or may not be appropriate for the age group in your class. You may decide whether to include it in the lesson.*

### **To students who have questions about masturbation**

Masturbation is an act that is solely for the purpose of bringing pleasure to oneself. More than that, it is a progressive sin that usually begins with sexual fantasies. Jesus Christ said, "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Mt 5:28). Fantasizing sexually about someone involves lustful thoughts, and clearly violates God's teaching about adultery in the heart. Apostle Paul also wrote that we should not be "brought under the power of any" (1 Cor 6:12). Masturbation is not only a form of sexual fantasy, but it is also addicting and habitual. It is an act that does not go away without the power of the Holy Spirit.

In order to keep ourselves pure and avoid this addictive form of self-pleasure, we need the power of the Holy Spirit to control our behavior, and we also need godly, mature, and spirit-filled mentors whom we can ask for guidance. This is because Satan likes to work in the dark, and exposing our weaknesses to the light - or in this case, confiding in a spiritual mentor and asking them to hold us accountable - gives us spiritual strength. Lastly, we need an escape plan to avoid indulging in sinful habits. When we know that someone is holding us accountable, and when we have an active plan for ourselves to follow when we realize we are falling into temptation, it becomes easier for us to rely on God's power to make better decisions.

### *Check for Understanding*

- 1. What was God's intention in creating sex and intimacy?** It is God's gift to human beings, designed for a union between one man and one woman within a marriage.
- 2. Why is sexual purity such an important matter in our faith? Name at least two reasons and their accompanying verses.**
  - a. It is God's will (1 Thess 4:3–5)
  - b. My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19)
  - c. I was bought at a high price with the precious blood of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 6:20; 1 Pet 1:18–19)
  - d. God will judge fornicators and adulterers (Heb 13:4)
  - e. God has called us to holiness (1 Pet 1:15–16)
- 3. What are the three steps in the process of temptation?** (1) Desire; (2) drawn away; (3) sin.
- 4. What is the difference between physical intimacy within a marriage, and lust?** Lust is a form of possessive desire that is fueled by greed. It is a selfish urge that focuses on pleasing oneself without considering the consequences.
- 5. Why is lust spiritually and physically destructive?** It blinds us to the consequences of our actions, and it leads to sin and destruction, or spiritual death.

### *Life Application*

#### **1. Swimming Against the Tide**

"We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one" (1 Jn 5:19). Satan is our enemy, and he uses the world as his vehicle to destroy our spiritual lives. Culture and media exert a strong pull in our lives and can easily brainwash us into following their patterns. In the world today, you're weird if you don't date for fun, and sex is a prerequisite for love. But such thinking is unbiblical, and we should not imitate the ways of the world because we are not of the world. God warns us, "Do not learn the ways of the nations [...]. For the practices of the peoples are worthless" (Jer 10:2–3 NIV). So how do we keep ourselves from going astray? How do we keep our way pure and follow God's will when our desires are so strong?

**a. Heed and hide God’s word in our hearts (Ps 119:9–11)**

This psalmist teaches us that to keep our way pure requires heeding God’s word, and hiding His word in our hearts. Why is this such an important thing to learn? How does simply studying God’s word help in fighting our desires? God’s word is filled with guidance and wisdom, and His word also has power. We often feel like we are drowning in the cares of this world, to the point that we forget to set aside time to study the Bible. But memorizing and meditating on God’s word is essential for our spiritual health.

There are two signs that we have taken heed of God’s word: humility and obedience. Do you think you have these two qualities in the context of your faith? If not, it’s time for you to set up a plan to read God’s word daily and learn to hide His word in your hearts. Carve out some time every day to meditate on what God has taught us through His word. This step will help you to have more strength when facing temptations. *(Optional: Prepare a list of verses for students to copy down and memorize over a period of time. Any of the verses in this lesson would be appropriate for this activity.)*

**b. Pray for the fullness of the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:24)**

Even if we have been baptized, our bodies are still weak. As believers, we are called to continually be filled with the Holy Spirit because of our weaknesses (Eph 5:18). As God’s children, navigating through society requires a greater dependency on the Holy Spirit in our lives. Otherwise, we are vulnerable to failing in our faith. This is because Satan wants to conform us to the image of this world, but the Holy Spirit will reveal the truth to us. He has the power to conform us to God’s will instead. Only with His help can we “put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph 4:24).

Swimming against the tide means equipping ourselves for the unexpected. No one ever plans to screw up their own life! But sometimes we fail in our faith because we haven’t prepared ourselves to face anything that may happen, so we end up swimming with the tide rather than against it. We end up following our desires and matching the ways of the world, instead of following God’s will.

Since we cannot plan for the unexpected, the most important thing we can do is to keep our heart full of God’s word and His Spirit. If we do, we will remain in control of our lives and resist temptation so that we can follow God’s guidance each day. This is because through His Spirit, God’s power will help us to break bad habits, constrain our lustful thoughts, and strengthen our “inner man” (Eph 3:16).

**2. Strategically Avoiding Temptation**

Aside from equipping ourselves with God’s power and word, we also need to be strategic about how we can avoid temptation, and plan escape routes for ourselves ahead of time. Let’s read a few testimonies about how three brethren in Christ did this.

**Testimony #1: Making a Covenant with My Eyes**

*One brother in high school quickly noticed that he had some rather unhealthy habits. He tended to look at girls and his eyes wandered often, for example. However, this brother was also very diligent in attending church services. He also prayed every night and read a small passage before he slept to keep himself connected to the word of God. Because of this, he was able to make a resolution with himself: he resolved no longer to look at girls like they were objects, and instead treat them like pure sisters in Christ at church, or simply friends at school. He made a “covenant” with his eyes, promising that he would no longer allow his eyes to wander. His daily connection to God and his diligence in*

*prayer and in attending services helped him to understand his weakness, form a resolution, and see it through so that he was eventually able to rid himself of unhealthy habits.*

### **Testimony #2: Two Are Better than One**

*One sister found herself often opening websites that encouraged lustful desires in her heart. To counter this temptation, she worked with her parents to set up a strict form of accountability to tackle the root of the temptation. They added software to remove any type of secrecy on her devices. The software that her parents bought was so strong that she couldn't even search common keywords like "hot"! Although she initially found it terribly inconvenient, she soon noticed that this accountability broke the pattern of temptation in her life. Instead of allowing her eyes to browse any type of website, the accountability software let her experience the power of God flowing through her. She didn't have to worry about anything anymore! She made use of the biblical teaching: two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor (Eccl 4:9–10).*

### **Testimony #3: The Power of God's Word**

*One brother was studying in college with one of his school friends who was of the opposite sex. She had made it known that she found him very attractive. He thought the same of her, but he drew the line and made it clear to both of them: they would only be friends. One evening, they were studying in the library late at night, when she suddenly proposed something: why not stay together for the night? She even tried to convince him that no one would know, and they could resume their friendship as normal after. The brother felt himself shaking, hard—something that he firmly believes was the power of the Holy Spirit—and clearly remembered the word of God: "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen 39:9). The verse was so powerful that it was brought back into his memory at that moment.*

*On top of the Holy Spirit's warnings, the brother had actually already made a plan of escape should such a thing happen. He didn't try to moderate the situation or make an excuse. He didn't try to linger or suggest to her that they should talk about this later. He simply got up, hurriedly gathered his things, and left. After that evening, he cut off all contact and refused to respond to any of her messages. Because he had planned an escape beforehand and also had the power of the Holy Spirit, this brother was able to escape a dangerous situation and avoid a serious sin.*

From these testimonies, we can see that maintaining our "purity" is not simply a matter of avoiding sexual intercourse before marriage. Keeping ourselves pure requires a lifestyle where we actively guard ourselves against the root of our temptations, our worldly desires. After today's lesson, how do you plan to guard yourself against sexual temptation? Discuss with the class different methods that you can take. For ideas, you can read the following short testimonies from various brothers and sisters:

#### **Seeking God daily with integrity**

- *"I was glad that K. and I were in a long-distance relationship before we got married. Being physically apart meant that we did not face the temptation to get too close physically. Instead, we learned more about each other by praying every day at the same time and holding weekly Bible studies online." – Sister L.*

#### **Keeping a strong conviction before God**

- *"I believe that keeping pure is a matter of self-respect. I want to keep God's word and be a pure bride to my husband when we get married. I expect the same of my future husband. Hence, I*

*made a rule in my life that I will not engage in pre-marital sex, no matter how sure I am that I will be marrying the guy I'm dating." – Sister S.*

### **Accountability before God and others**

- *"I guess you can consider me 'old-fashioned,' but I never even held her hands until after we were married. This has been my conviction since I was young. Our dates consisted of very clean activities like watching movies with my family members, eating at restaurants with church friends, or doing church work with other brethren. We never dated 'in private' – we were always in public spaces. 'Public activities' did not stop us from getting to know each other better. In fact, the best way to know a person is to see how she behaves with other people." – Brother C.*

### **Do not become a stumbling block**

- *"Guys, I have been told, are weak visually. I make sure that I am always dressed modestly so I do not give way to the devil to create any form of temptation for any brother." – Sister A.*

We learned earlier that lust is self-centered and thinks only of "I," or "me." It blinds us to the consequences and leads us from sin to spiritual death. But it isn't easy to overcome these desires. *"I'm just lonely." "My friends all do it." "It's not like it will hurt anyone."* It's easy to come up with excuses to follow our physical desires. But in the end, this is simply our hearts succumbing to our worldly desires and ignoring the will of our Father in heaven. Therefore, swimming against the tide requires that we do the opposite, and follow God's will instead. To do this, as we learned today, we need the power of the Holy Spirit to help us resist temptation, a strategic plan to escape any dangerous situations, and a determination to avoid following our desires.

### **Memory Verse**

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"For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God." (1 Thessalonians 4:3–5)

### **Meaning**

1. What does it mean to be "sanctified"? It means separation and consecration. It means keeping ourselves apart from sin and seeking holiness.
2. To be sanctified, we must: (a) abstain from sexual immorality; and (b) know how to control our own body in a way that is holy and honorable (v. 4 NIV).

### **Conclusion**

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With the casual and ever-changing standards of the world, it is difficult to understand why we need to abide by God's unchanging will. But we need to remember that God wants us to be set apart from the world. He loves us and wants us to be holy, especially when it comes to our sexual desires, which He had created for union within a marriage. To follow His will, we need to understand the root of sexual sin – our own desires – and the nature of lust, which leads to destruction. This understanding, along with the power of God's word and the Holy Spirit, will help us to overcome our desires and temptations.



## Lesson 12 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What does it mean to be “sanctified”? How do we become sanctified?  
*It means keeping ourselves apart from sin and seeking holiness. To do so, we must abstain from sexual immorality, and know how to control our own body in a way that is holy and honorable.*
2. “For you were \_\_\_\_\_ at a \_\_\_\_\_; therefore \_\_\_\_\_ God in your \_\_\_\_\_ and in your \_\_\_\_\_, which are \_\_\_\_\_.” (1 Corinthians 6:20)  
*bought, price, glorify, body, spirit, God’s*
3. What was God’s intention in creating sex and intimacy?  
*It is God’s gift to human beings, designed to be a union between one man and one woman within a marriage.*
4. Why are our sexual desires so dangerous?  
*Physical intimacy is something that God gave to us for us to share with our life partner, and no one else. Succumbing to sexual temptation outside of our marriage means giving up the sanctity that God has called us to, and letting our desires lead us to spiritual separation from God.*
5. What is the difference between physical intimacy within a marriage and lust?  
*Lust is a form of possessive desire that is fueled by greed. It is a selfish urge that focuses on pleasing oneself without considering the consequences.*
6. How do we follow God’s will when our desires are so strong?  
*We need to hide God’s word in our hearts, pray for the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and be strategic in avoiding temptation.*
7. What are your personal thoughts on why it is important to stay pure, and how you can stay pure?  
Share your thoughts and reflections in two or three paragraphs. Use a separate page if necessary.  
*Personal answers.*