

Examen

A guided examination of consciousness related to lust

Spend a few moments in silence...

Become aware of God's presence...

Think back over the day:

- ❖ Think about the people you encountered and your interactions with them.
- ❖ What did you work on today?
- ❖ What were your primary emotions today?

Did I rationalize anything that I knew would potentially put me at risk for lust? In what ways did I put myself on the path of lustful thoughts / behaviors? Did I *flee* from the source of temptation? ...or *linger*?

Did I consume media (web, TV, books, music) today that glamorizes or glorifies sinful sexual behavior, that promotes illicit sexuality or degrades the potential goodness and beauty of human sexuality as God intended it?

Do I currently own or have in my home or workplace any materials that could instigate the possibility of lust? (Pornography – soft or hard core, catalogues, art, etc.) Are the settings on my web browsers set to “safe” mode only? Who knows about my lustful tendencies? Am I accountable?

In what ways did I *objectify* (use - not necessarily sexually) other people today?

Did I live with self-control in other areas of my life today? (Food, anger, alcohol, etc.)

In what ways did you seek to *rightly* direct your desire for human intimacy today?

Spend a few minutes engaging with God...

- ❖ Pray for any person you were tempted to lust after; offer him/her to God – recognizing him/her as a person made in God's image. Ask God for forgiveness for objectifying this person. Receive God's mercy.
- ❖ Spend a moment praising God that He has made you a sexual being.
- ❖ Offer thanksgiving to God for the ultimate fulfillment of your sexual desire held out in the gospel. Offer God the struggle or suffering you endure because of a lack of fulfillment in the present.

Offer a prayer of confession:

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

End your time of reflection by offering thanksgiving for all that God brings to mind.

Prayer for receiving the fullness of sexuality

“Lord, you have created me in your image and likeness as a man/woman. Help me to accept and receive my sexuality as a gift from you. You have inscribed in my very being, in my sexuality, the call to love as you love, in sincere self-giving, and you have made the “one flesh” union of man and woman in marriage a sign of your own life and love in the world. Grant me the grace always to resist the many lies that continually assail the truth and meaning of the great gift of sexuality. Grant me purity of heart so that I might see the image of your glory in the beauty of others, and one day see you face to face. Amen.”

Prayer in the moment of temptation to lust

“This is a woman (man) made in the image and likeness of God, never to be looked upon as an object for my gratification. Lord Jesus, grant me the grace to see the image of your glory in the beauty of this woman (man), and order my sexual desires toward the truth of love. I renounce any tendency within me to use others for my own pleasure, and I unite my sufferings with yours on the cross. Amen.”