

FOCUS

What is the focal point of your eyes? With the advent of summer comes girls who wear less clothes and guys who do more looking. The apostle John referred to this when he described the three ways that we desire life apart from God. He called it sin, namely the lust of the eyes—wanting something that’s not ours and not part of God’s design for our lives (1 John 2:16). The focal point of our eyes might be on the other end of a mouse click, a remote, a steering wheel, a monthly subscription, or a swimming pool.

The problem is that the image never satisfies (1 John 2:17). We often think that short-term gratification will fulfill our desires, but the recurring images leave us feeling guilty and wanting more of a quenching fix to satisfy our thirsty souls. Three thousand years ago, Solomon wrote that the eyes are never satisfied (Proverbs 27:20).

Women are not off the hook. Solomon had a little experience with the opposite sex with 700 wives and 300 concubines (1 Kings 11:3). He said that a woman attempts to captivate another man with her eyes (Proverbs 6:25). You know the look. It comes from her desire to be pursued and nurture the one who pursues her. Women not only use their eyes, they frequently leverage their bodies to attract the attention of another man.

Jesus said that the eyes and the heart are inextricably linked (Matthew 5:28). We see the temptation, we desire the temptation in our hearts, then we act with our bodies. Temptation is not sin. Our desire to pursue life apart from God is sin (James 1:13-15). Each one of us will be tempted, but God will always provide a doorway out (1 Corinthians 10:13). Jesus said that the solution is the ***FOCUS*** of the eyes because they are linked to the heart, which controls the actions of our bodies (Matthew 5:27-30).

We were designed to be satisfied through an intimate relationship with Christ. He is the satisfying focal point of our desires. As with a magnifying glass, the focal point of our eyes is magnified, and all that surrounds it is fuzzy. When temptation of the eyes comes, we stand at a 180-degree pivot-point to either focus on Christ or the temptation. If we focus our eyes on Christ, then the temptation becomes fuzzy. If we focus on the tempting images, then Christ becomes fuzzy.

Here is an acronym rooted in Scripture to help you ***FOCUS***.

Fix your eyes on Christ (Hebrews 12:2). This means an intent gaze of your heart and eyes on Him. As a result, He will be magnified in your life.

Open the eyes of your heart by asking Christ to experience His riches, hope, and incomparable power for your life (Ephesians 1:18-19). His Spirit in you is that power that fulfills your every desire (Ephesians 1:20-23).

Covenant with your eyes not to lust after a girl who is someone else’s wife or daughter (Job 31:1). Job made a commitment to keep Christ as the focal point of his eyes. Too often as men, we say, “I can’t control this desire. I have to look.”

Women frequently yield to their desire to be pursued and to nurture the man who pursues her. As a woman, covenant with your eyes not to captivate a man who is not your husband. When it comes to clothing, ask, “Is it too tight, too short, or too revealing?” Young girls, determine by whom, when, where, why, and how you want to be pursued *before* an emotional connection exists so that you will not fall prey to nurturing a pursuer who is unsuited for you.

Understand that you will be tempted and that God will always provide a doorway out (1 Corinthians 10:13). This is the 180-degree pivot-point of the focus of your eyes.

You will yield to either Christ in you or the temptation. Dads, guide your daughters to dress modestly limiting their contribution to the temptation factor of other men.

Shift your eyes back to Christ, not the temptation or the sin (when caught turning your eyes 180 degrees from Christ). Make this practical *first* by memorizing Scripture that can be recalled when tempted—that's what Jesus did (Matthew 4:1-11). *Second*, recruit a friend with whom you can share your temptations. This transparent confession can free you from acting on the sin and keep you accountable to another. *Third*, surround yourself with photographs of your spouse and children. Some have suggested that a man should keep in clear view a photograph of his wife as a little girl to enhance seeing her as her dad did—vulnerable and in need of protection. *Fourth*, men look another woman in the eyes, seeing her at the soul level, rather than gaze at her body. Women, don't captivate with your eyes or body a man who is not your husband. Ask your husband each day if your clothing is modest.

FOCUS your eyes where God intended, on Christ and your spouse.

FOCUS Questions (For Women)

Read Hebrews 12:2. The writer is offering a picture of a runner fixing his eyes on a mile marker in the distance. Where do you currently fix the eyes of your heart, on Christ or your temptations? Why?

Read Ephesians 1:18-23. Have you ever asked Christ to open the eyes of your heart in order to experience His riches, hope, and incomparable power for your life? If so, what were the benefits? If not, what would change in your life by asking Him to do so?

Read Job 31:1 and Proverbs 6:25. Have you ever made a covenant with your eyes to not use them to attract the attention of a male on the outside, thinking that he will pursue you on the inside? If not, what would you have to give up in order to do so?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. Do you understand that you are going to be tempted to attract a guy to look, lust, and linger after your body as a tool to love you on the inside, but God will always provide a way out? Do you have a real life experience where you were tempted and you caved in, rather than turning to God? Can you look back and see how God had provided a doorway out?

Read Matthew 5:27-30. Jesus is using hyperbole, an exaggeration to make a point. What is the purpose of His statement? What verse would be beneficial for you to memorize, one that you could recall when tempted in an effort to shift your eyes back to Christ? What friend could you recruit to confess your temptations? Would you commit today to FOCUS and pursue Christ to satisfy your desires?

FOCUS Questions (For Men)

Read Hebrews 12:2. The writer is offering a picture of a runner fixing his eyes on a mile marker in the distance. Where do you currently fix the eyes of your heart, on Christ or your temptations? Why?

Read Ephesians 1:18-23. Have you ever asked Christ to open the eyes of your heart in order to experience His riches, hope, and incomparable power for your life? If so, what were the benefits? If not, what would change in your life by asking Him to do so?

Read Job 31:1. Have you ever made a covenant with your eyes to not lust after a girl? What would you have to give up in order to do so?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. Do you understand that you are going to be tempted to look, lust, and linger after a female body that does not belong to your wife, but God will always provide a way out? Do you have a real life experience where you were tempted and you caved in, rather than turning to God? Can you look back and see how God had provided a doorway out?

Read Matthew 5:27-30. Jesus is using hyperbole, an exaggeration to make a point. What is the purpose of His statement? What verse would be beneficial for you to memorize, one that you could recall when tempted in an effort to shift your eyes back to Christ? What friend could you recruit to confess your temptations? Would you commit today to FOCUS and look at women only in the eyes in order to see them at the soul level?



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