

following that it brings. It was a little fruit led to a big sin (Genesis 3:6). A little anger led to a big consequence (Numbers 20:7-12). A little fire led to a big burning (Leviticus 10:1-2). A little lie led to a big confrontation (Acts 5:1-11). A little look led to a big disaster (2 Samuel 11). 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, betrayal, and impurity.

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 upkeeps 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 to fruitful gardens in the following areas:

- They compete for resources.
- They release chemicals that can harm the environment of plants.
- They can overtake garden space.[5]

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 and can lead to adultery, familial problems, and occupational turmoil. 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 but only if it is fulfilled through the right outlet (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.

[5]<https://everythingbackyard.net/what-do-weeds-do-to-plants/#:~:text=The%20Impact%20of%20Weeds%20on%20Plant%20Health%3A%201,dominate%20garden%20spaces%2C%20reducing%20biodiversity%20and%20visual%20appeal>



Ten Practical
Ways to Overcome
LUST

A Big Weed
in a Man’s
Garden

Noah Olson

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. 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. Using the illustration of a gardener and 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 are determined NOT to have weeds. They till the ground and prepare to plant fruit, not weeds. Job made a "covenant" 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 (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" (Emp. mine, NO). So that you can guard your heart (Proverbs 4:23), read the reviews of movies beforehand. If there is 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 (Proverbs 4:23).

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, text or call a designated partner daily. 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 it alone (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).

5. Read up on weeds (Psalm 119:11). Familiarizing oneself with weeds helps gardeners get rid of them. They need 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. 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. One man began to attend therapy with a certain psychologist. He had been struggling with a personal vice for years and tried so many things in order to **suppress his consequences**. "One doctor told me don't do it as much and another said I should just not worry about it. What should I do?" The psychologist looked at him and said very solemnly, "I see that you have attempted suppress your consequences, but have you tried to **quit** the sin yet?" Want to know how to stop lusting? QUIT!

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